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***Ethics and Foreign Policy:  
Negotiation and Invention***

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Department of Politics and International Studies

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## *Declaration*

I confirm that this thesis is entirely my own work and has not been submitted for a degree at another University.



## *Abstract*

To what extent can ethics and foreign policy be conceived as possible? Instead of answering within the implied dichotomy of possibility and impossibility, this thesis argues for a reconceptualisation of the dichotomy. Ethics and foreign policy are better understood on the basis of *undecidability*: neither simply possible nor impossible, but both at the same time. A deconstructive reading of British (1997-2006) and EU (1999-2004) foreign policy, both of which make claims to ethics, reveals how the issue is beset by internal contradictions, paradoxes and aporias. The deconstruction is structured around the concepts of subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality, each of which constitutes an important point of undecidability within British and EU representations of their ethical dimension. The subject of ethics and foreign policy is always haunted and inhabited by its object, responsibility is necessarily irresponsible, and hospitality contains an irrepressible hostility. Thus, ethics and foreign policy is best conceived as undecidably *im-possible*. However, such undecidability cannot be used to justify abandoning the goal of an ethical foreign policy. Rather, a Derridean ‘negotiation’ is proposed. Negotiation seeks to remain loyal to the dual injunction of deconstruction, an undecidability which is the condition of ethics and politics, and a decision which decides, and closes to certain figures of otherness. It requires a permanent questioning, testing and invention of the promise of ethics and foreign policy. This produces a range of illustrative suggestions for the possible enactment of an *ethico-political foreign policy*, which would refer to and strive for an ultimately unrealisable *ethical foreign policy*. This research contributes a fundamental critique and questioning of the possibility of ethics and foreign policy. It provides a revealing exploration of British and EU foreign policy from the period, based around responsibility and hospitality. Finally, the thesis introduces the Derridean notion of *negotiation* to the discipline, seen as a way of moving through the potential paralysis brought by the undecidability arising from foundational questioning.



## *Abbreviations*

7/7	Terrorist attacks in London on 7 July 2005
9/11	Terrorist attacks in New York and Virginia on 11 September 2001
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CA	Commission for Africa
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CREON	Comparative Research on the Events of Nations
DIC	Doctrine of the International Community
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
FPA	Foreign Policy Analysis
FYROM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
HR	High Representative
ICISS	International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty
IR	International Relations
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
RAM	Rational Actor Model
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UN	United Nations
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WTO	World Trade Organisation

## *Introduction*

Questions of ethics and morality<sup>1</sup> can be conceived as a matter of how we ought to conduct our lives in relation to others, and otherness in general. ‘Otherness’ is that which is different, that which exceeds our self, our understanding, the totalisation of our knowledge. As such, it does not only mean other *people*, but *anything* which resists our comprehension. This is not to say that our ‘self’ gives itself over to such total understanding. As subjects ‘we’ are always strangers to ourselves,<sup>2</sup> fragmented, containing and constituted by difference and otherness which cannot be subsumed into a simple, coherent self. The self itself does not permit complete knowledge or comprehension. To speak of ethics then is to speak of how we should act in relation to this otherness.

In his reading of foreign policy as a politics of identity, David Campbell draws a distinction between two understandings of foreign policy: what he calls ‘foreign policy’ and Foreign Policy.<sup>3</sup> The broader practice of ‘foreign policy’ refers to discursive “practices of differentiation or modes of exclusion (possibly figured as relationships of otherness) that constitute their object as ‘foreign’ in the process of dealing with them”.<sup>4</sup> This is foreign policy seen as a general practice of constituting ‘sameness’ and ‘otherness’ through their representation – of differentiating and excluding the ‘foreign’ from the ‘domestic’, the ‘inside’ from the ‘outside’, the ‘other’ from the ‘self’. Foreign Policy, on the other hand, is how the disciplines of international relations (IR)<sup>5</sup> and foreign policy analysis (FPA) generally conceive foreign policy: as a state-based practice towards that which is beyond the state’s borders, that which is ‘foreign’ and not ‘domestic’ or part of the collective ‘self’. The capitalised Foreign Policy is therefore a

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<sup>1</sup> The terms ‘ethical’ and ‘moral’ are used as synonyms in this thesis, following Hutchings argument that the distinction drawn between the two by scholars such as Jurgen Habermas is untenable. See Kimberley Hutchings, *Kant, Critique and Politics* (London: Routledge, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> Michael Dillon, “The Sovereign and the Stranger”, in Jenny Edkins, Nalini Persram, and Veronique Pin-Fat (eds.), *Sovereignty and Subjectivity* (Boulder, Co: Lynne Rienner, 1999), p. 118.

<sup>3</sup> David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* Revised ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp. 68-69.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 68-69.

<sup>5</sup> From now on ‘IR’ will be used to refer to the discipline and ‘international relations’ to the empirical matter which the discipline studies.



particular and highly circumscribed instance of the ‘foreign policy’<sup>6</sup> which everyone takes part in, both individually and collectively, from moment to moment.

### *Ethics and/as Foreign Policy*

Campbell’s refiguration of foreign policy has considerable implications for the importance placed upon questions of ethics and foreign policy. If, as is commonly the case, they are seen as two separate areas joined by an ‘and’ or an ‘in,’ issues of ethics can be trivialised as one peripheral concern or potentially interesting question regarding foreign policy. But they remain marginal; ethics is considered far from *central* to the conduct of foreign policy. Hence, John A. Vasquez can argue that, “[j]ust about everyone thinks that morality should play some role in foreign policy, just about everyone that is except for professional diplomats, and of course, political scientists.”<sup>7</sup> While Vasquez separates diplomats and political scientists from “just about everyone” to demonstrate that the discipline should give attention to morality in foreign policy, he is also marking the issue as peripheral: morality should play *some* role *in* foreign policy. The issue is thus presented as *interdisciplinary*, and thus not *vital* to either the study of ethics *or* foreign policy.

However, the thinking of ethics and foreign policy above illustrates that, in fact, they are far from separate. Both are concerned with the same problem: how we constitute and relate to otherness. The subject of ethics *is* foreign policy: it examines how we *ought* to relate to otherness. And if foreign policy is a practice of constructing otherness and relating to it, *the* question of foreign policy must be how we *ought* to do this: a question of ethics.<sup>8</sup> Even if questions of ‘ought’ are not posed in foreign policy, assumptions are made which *presuppose* a certain production of and relation to otherness, a certain ‘self’ and a certain ‘other’, and the way they ought to relate. Questions of foreign policy are

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<sup>6</sup> Campbell, *Writing Security*, p. 69.

<sup>7</sup> John A. Vasquez, “Ethics, Foreign Policy, and Liberal Wars: The Role of Restraint in Moral Decision Making” *International Studies Perspectives* Vol. 6, No. 3 (2005), p. 307.

<sup>8</sup> Peter Singer makes issues of “ought” central to ethics in the “Introduction” to his ethics reader. See, Peter Singer (ed.), *Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 1.



therefore highly defined instances of questioning ethics, and vice versa. Ethics is not just one issue among many for foreign policy. Indeed, its importance is difficult to overstate. Foreign policy is *the* issue of ethics and ethics is *the* issue of foreign policy.

To what extent, then, can an ethical foreign policy be conceived as possible? In the terms outlined above, this is to ask: can a truly ethical relation to otherness in/as foreign policy be a possibility? The temptation set by these questions is to answer in terms of the dichotomy it tacitly implies: it is *either* possible, *or* impossible. Most answers to this question succumb to such a stultifying logic, seeing it as one or the other, sometimes depending upon the circumstances. For example, Will Bartlett concludes that an ethical foreign policy is “difficult, if not impossible, to define” let alone enact.<sup>9</sup> Mervyn Frost argues that what matters in an ethical foreign policy is the “foster[ing] of free individuality”, but suggests its impossible implementation by observing that “[i]n many international situations there are very few means available” to achieve this.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, Vasquez and Robert W. McElroy both see an ethical foreign policy as a distinct possibility.<sup>11</sup>

In contrast, the rigorous deconstruction of ethics and foreign policy undertaken by this thesis reveals the need to *reconceptualise* the dichotomy of possibility/impossibility and *displace* it. Inspired by the thought of Jacques Derrida and the non-method of deconstruction, this thesis argues that an ethical foreign policy can best be conceived as *both* possible *and* impossible, but neither *simply* one nor the other. Any ethical, responsible relation to otherness is also always an unethical irresponsible relation. The ethicality of foreign policy is *undecidable*: neither simply possible nor impossible.

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<sup>9</sup> Will Bartlett, “‘Simply the right thing to do’: Labour goes to war”, in Richard Little and Mark Wickham-Jones (eds.), *New Labour’s Foreign Policy: A New Moral Crusade?* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 143.

<sup>10</sup> Mervyn Frost, “Putting the World to Rights: Britain’s Ethical Foreign Policy” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* Vol. 12, No. 2 (1999), p. 88.

<sup>11</sup> See Robert W. McElroy, *Morality and American Foreign Policy: The Role of Ethics in International Affairs* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992) and Vasquez, “Ethics, Foreign Policy, and Liberal Wars”.



This deconstructive undecidability is, however, far from negative; undecidability is not the same as impossibility, and it calls for the opposite of an abandonment of ethics and foreign policy. The aim of a deconstruction is to reveal the complexity and the contradictions within what one strives to enact and make possible. While there is what Derrida calls a “Necessity” compelling a deconstruction, everything that he seems to oppose through this deconstruction “is exactly what I’m after in life. I love the voice, I love presence.”<sup>12</sup> Equally, the deconstruction of ethics and foreign policy is not merely *opposed* to its possibility, but is inspired by a desire *for* an ethical, responsible relation to the other. Yet, to be dedicated to such a goal means also to obey the “Necessity” of interrupting this desire and showing that its achievement is never possible, if not absolutely *impossible*.

The attraction and appeal of a deconstructive approach thus also lies in its resistance to the apparent paralysis of undecidability. Far from justifying an rejection of any prospect of an ethical foreign policy, deconstruction calls for a testing and ‘negotiation’ of its promise. It allows that there continues to be that in the concept of ethics as it arises in foreign policy texts – the aspiration of a responsible relation towards the other and otherness – which remains valuable and worth struggling for. While exposing the fundamental im-possibility of *achieving* this promise, deconstruction gives no excuse or justification for its abandonment.

This thesis argues that the promise of ethics and foreign policy can best be preserved through negotiation of individual ethico-political foreign policies. A negotiation permits the possibility of context-bound decisions which retain a reference to an ethical foreign policy (ethico-), while always remaining undecidable (political) as to their ethicality. In this way, negotiation retains the hope for, and the aspiration towards, *more* ethics and foreign policy rather than less. A truly ethical foreign policy, however, must remain the always referred to, forever undecidable, to come.

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<sup>12</sup> Jacques Derrida, in Michael Payne and John Schad (eds.), *life. after. theory* (London: Continuum, 2003), p. 8.



## *Structure and Approach*

This rethinking of ethics and foreign policy as interdependent, as well as indicating their profound importance as a single issue, also has implications for the way in which the issue is studied. A tendency of the minimal extant literature on the subject is to view the two as an “intersection” in the same way that R.B.J. Walker characterises the traditional treatment of ethics and international relations.<sup>13</sup> “‘Ethics’ comes to be understood as an achieved body of principles, norms and rules already codified in texts and traditions. And ‘international relations’ is understood as a realm of recalcitrant practical problems in dire need of greater moral scruple.”<sup>14</sup> The two separate areas thus intersect through the *application* of one to the other: “a singular ethical theory that could be devised in the abstract and applied in the concrete”.<sup>15</sup> Thus, certain scholars look to the application of deontological or consequentialist rules,<sup>16</sup> others to the just war tradition,<sup>17</sup> while for some a highly specific notion, such as the “good international citizen”, is devised to “evaluate the ethical dimension of the Blair government’s foreign policy”.<sup>18</sup>

It is precisely this *application* of a pre-established ethics *to* the empirical arena of foreign policy that is ruled out by the symbiotic relation *between* ethics and/as foreign policy. ‘Ethics’ is not an arsenal of principles we can simply fire at a problem, but “an ongoing historical practice”<sup>19</sup> regarding what our relation to otherness *ought* to be. Meanwhile, like international relations for Walker, ‘foreign policy’ and its theoretical study are far from lacking any ethical assumptions. Rather, they are “already constituted through

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<sup>13</sup> R. B. J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 50.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> David Campbell and Michael J. Shapiro, “From Ethical Theory to the Ethical Relation”, in David Campbell and Michael J. Shapiro (eds.), *Moral Spaces: Rethinking Ethics and World Politics* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. viii.

<sup>16</sup> Chris Brown, “Ethics, interests and foreign policy”, in Karen E. Smith and Margot Light, *Ethics and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 19.

<sup>17</sup> Vasquez, “Ethics, Foreign Policy, and Liberal Wars”, p. 314.

<sup>18</sup> Nicholas J. Wheeler and Tim Dunne, “Good international citizenship: a third way for British foreign policy” *International Affairs* Vol. 74, No. 4 (1998), p. 848.

<sup>19</sup> Walker, *Inside/Outside*, p. 51.



accounts of ethical possibility”.<sup>20</sup> Chapter I illustrates this latter point by bringing together poststructuralist IR theory and FPA literature, the sub-discipline of IR dedicated to the theorisation of foreign policy. While this is the literature in which one could perhaps expect an extended discussion of the possibility of ethics and foreign policy, the subject has in fact been almost entirely ignored. Yet this ignorance is less interesting than the way in which certain unstated assumptions made by FPA work to construct foreign policy as a realm in which ethics can be marginalised and disregarded. Implicitly, FPA constructs ethics and foreign policy as, at best, an irrelevancy and, at worst, an impossibility.

Avoiding an approach that treats ethics and foreign policy as separate areas, this thesis investigates how the two are jointly constructed within certain foreign policies. To look at the possibility of ethics and foreign policy is to examine how they are represented together, how this is considered *possible*, and whether the logic of this possibility stands up to scrutiny. Chapter II explains how this can be done through a deconstructive *reading* of foreign policy *as text*. Contra-FPA, it is argued that there can be no foreign policy *per se*, a *thing itself* of foreign policy outside of its representation. Foreign policy, if there is such a thing, can only be examined in the way it is described and mediated through language and discourse. As Derrida observes, any ‘act’, of foreign policy or otherwise, cannot be “simply dissociated from, or opposed to discourse”.<sup>21</sup>

Studied in this way, the *application* of an ethics from outside the particular text is no longer justified or necessary. The representation and understanding of ethics and foreign policy *within* the text can be deconstructed to reveal the possibility and impossibility of an ethical foreign policy, along with how this dichotomy breaks down. The theoretical study of foreign policy, as demonstrated in Chapter I, and the foreign policy texts themselves, illustrated in Chapters III, IV and V, are built around binary oppositions such as inside/outside, national/international, subject/object, responsible/irresponsible,

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Jacques Derrida, “Hospitality, Justice and Responsibility: A dialogue with Jacques Derrida”, in Richard Kearney and Mark Dooley (eds.), *Questioning Ethics: Contemporary Debates in Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 65-66.



and so on. Deconstruction is thus a particularly useful approach because it is attuned to the way *all* text is structured around hierarchical binaries, especially those which foreign policy often defers back to and assumes: presence/absence, speech/writing, possibility/impossibility.

Through a close reading of texts we can find points of weakness, points of *incision*, where deconstruction operates, overturning and displacing hierarchical binaries. This displacement is the realm of *undecidability*. An undecidable disturbs the structure of the text through being *neither* one thing (ethical, for example), *nor* another (unethical), yet being both one (ethical) *and* the other (unethical). To deconstruct discourses of ethics and foreign policy then is to examine the foreign policy text for claims to ethics, and then reveal how they break down under their own undecidable logic.

The specific texts examined are British foreign policy<sup>22</sup> from 1997-2006 and European Union (EU) foreign policy from 1999-2004. Firstly, the research on British foreign policy comprised a careful reading and deconstructive analysis of all foreign policy speeches, interviews, media appearances and press conferences given by Prime Minister Tony Blair (1997-), Foreign Secretaries Robin Cook (1997-2001) and Jack Straw (2001-2006), and several Junior Foreign Office Ministers who held office between 1997 and 2006.<sup>23</sup> The research undertaken is crucial to understanding how ethics and foreign policy is represented in British foreign policy during the period under study.

Secondly, the research on EU foreign policy consisted of a similarly close reading and analysis of all the foreign policy speeches, interviews, media appearances and press conferences of Javier Solana (High Representative (HR) for the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), 1999-), Romano Prodi (President of the EU Commission, 1999-2004) and Chris Patten (EU Commissioner for External Relations, 1999-2004). The six month rotating EU Presidency is excluded because the thesis examines *EU*, not

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<sup>22</sup> By 'British foreign policy' I mean foreign policy conducted by the government of the United Kingdom.

<sup>23</sup> Those Junior Ministers whose speeches are used in this thesis are: Peter Hain, Kim Howells, Denis MacShane, Mike O'Brien, Bill Rammell, Ian Pearson and Lord Triesman.



*European* foreign policy, which Brian White suggests includes the Member States as well.<sup>24</sup>

As Chapter II outlines, these speeches and public statements are representative of the foreign policy text but cannot exhaust it. In Campbell's terms, everyone constitutes and re-constitutes the Foreign Policy text through taking part in discursive practices of 'foreign policy'. In other words, the text of foreign policy is not something that can be separated cleanly from any other text; all discursive differentiation between 'selves' and 'others', and representations of how this otherness is dealt with, contributes to foreign policy. However, the ultimately unjustifiable restriction of the research to the figures outlined above is due to the offices which they occupied. These offices are in the best position to both *speak* and be *spoken by* their foreign policy text.

British and EU foreign policy are chosen primarily because of the prominence both give to the ethical. This could not have been clearer in the case of British foreign policy. Under two weeks after the new Labour Government had been elected, the new Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, emphasised ethics in his first major address. His Foreign Office 'Mission Statement' claimed that, "[o]ur foreign policy must have an ethical dimension and must support the demands of other peoples for the democratic rights on which we insist for ourselves."<sup>25</sup> Subsequently Cook distanced himself from specific use of the term "ethical dimension", and the term "ethical foreign policy" was denied as it was "too easily capable of being misunderstood as grandstanding".<sup>26</sup>

However, far from fading with Cook's disquiet, the rhetoric of ethics and morality came to play a *greater* role in the British foreign policy discourse. John Kampfner, for instance, notes that Prime Minister Tony Blair's language in particular increasingly

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<sup>24</sup> Brian White, *Understanding European Foreign Policy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 39-41.

<sup>25</sup> Robin Cook, "Mission Statement", 12 May 1997, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/indonesia/Story/0,2763,190889,00.html> (retrieved 11 July 2003).

<sup>26</sup> Robin Cook, "Beyond good intentions – government, business and the environment", Speech to the Business and Environment Dinner, 17 November 1998. Unless otherwise stated, all speeches, interviews and press conferences by Foreign Office Ministers have been downloaded from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website: <http://www.fco.gov.uk> (retrieved between 11 October 2004 and 1 May 2006).



invoked morality, drawing instant comparisons with Cook's 'Mission Statement'. Blair, he claimed, "had belatedly found an ethical dimension of his own. The detail was different in places, but the idea was not."<sup>27</sup> Chapters III and IV indicate the ways in which this ethical dimension was understood, how it was developed and sustained over nine years in Blair's, and his Foreign Ministers', public statements. Crucially, these chapters also explicate the way this ethical dimension falls apart under the weight of its own internal contradictions.

Academic debate surrounding EU foreign policy rarely focuses on ethics, instead concerning itself with whether the EU can be seen as having a foreign policy at all.<sup>28</sup> However, by rethinking foreign policy as text, as a representation of the means by which otherness is constituted and related to, we can see that questioning whether the EU is capable of foreign policy *per se* is no longer as pertinent. Regardless of its institutional and conceptual dissimilarity to a nation-state, its lack of an executive, foreign policy bureaucracy and resources,<sup>29</sup> the EU actively works to both construct and interact with a 'foreign' otherness through representational practices.

Like the British text, EU foreign policy has also apportioned great significance to the ethical; indeed, Hazel Smith even claims that the EU "seems to view itself as an intrinsically ethical foreign policy actor".<sup>30</sup> Though Smith offers no evidence for this, textual support nonetheless abounds. Prodi, for instance, declares that, as Europeans, "our distinguishing feature is our sense of responsibility",<sup>31</sup> while Solana emphasises

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<sup>27</sup> John Kampfner, *Blair's Wars* (London: Free Press, 2003), p. 124.

<sup>28</sup> Such questions have been prominently raised especially by Christopher Hill – see, "The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualizing Europe's International Role" *Journal of Common Market Studies* Vol. 31, No. 3 (1993), pp. 305-328 – and Roy H. Ginsberg – see, "Conceptualizing the EU as an International Actor: Narrowing the Theoretical Capability-Expectations Gap" *Journal of Common Market Studies* Vol. 37, No. 3 (1999), pp. 429-454. For a more general introduction to this question, see Karen E. Smith, *European Union Foreign Policy in a Changing World* (Cambridge: Polity, 2003).

<sup>29</sup> Hill, "The Capability-Expectations Gap...", p. 316.

<sup>30</sup> Hazel Smith, *European Union Foreign Policy: What it is and What it Does* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), p. 271.

<sup>31</sup> Romano Prodi, "The European project in the world: between values and politics," Speech to Fondazione Don Tonino Bello Alessano, Lecce, 13 June 2003. All speeches, interviews and press conferences by Romano Prodi, President of the EU Commission, have been downloaded from the Commission archives website: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/archives/commission\\_1999\\_2004/prodi/speeches/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/archives/commission_1999_2004/prodi/speeches/index_en.htm) (accessed 16 August 2005).



that this responsibility extends to those beyond the EU's borders.<sup>32</sup> It would be "morally untenable, sometimes unthinkable, to sit idle, without reacting to... human misery and distress. Therefore we are compelled to act."<sup>33</sup>

The period between 1999 and 2004 in EU foreign policy provides a useful contrast to British foreign policy. While the British text gives a long term and comparatively clear line in ethics, the EU text provides a concise, yet more ambiguous understanding of the possibility of enacting ethics and foreign policy. This period also encapsulates the dates of the Prodi Commission, which saw the coming together of three key figures (Prodi, Patten and Solana, who took up his position as HR for the CFSP in 1999) joined by a belief in what Prodi calls "an ethical dimension to politics".<sup>34</sup> The nature and understanding of EU foreign policy's ethical dimension, as well as its deconstruction, is examined in detail in Chapters III and V.

What emerges from the empirical research into British and EU foreign policy is that, in both cases, ethics is understood as a matter of *responsibility*. That is, the possibility of ethics and foreign policy is constructed as an issue of a responsible relation to otherness. While there is more to the "ongoing historical practice"<sup>35</sup> of ethics than 'responsibility', its centrality to this thesis arises from the texts of the two foreign policies examined. As observed above, a deconstruction searches out points of undecidability in apparently coherent and cohesive texts. With this in mind, Chapters III, IV and V are structured around such undecidable moments in the British and EU texts: their claims to *subjectivity*, or rather, their construction of the subject of ethics and foreign policy as a subject of responsibility; the account of a *responsibility* to protect and save in British

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<sup>32</sup> Javier Solana, Speech at the inaugural conference of the course, "Towards a new international morality: the humanitarian interventions", University of Alcalá de Henares, Madrid, 7 July 2000. Unless otherwise stated, all speeches, interviews and press conferences by Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, have been downloaded from the Council of the EU website: [http://ue.eu.int/cms3\\_applications/applications/solana/index.asp?lang=EN&cmsid=256](http://ue.eu.int/cms3_applications/applications/solana/index.asp?lang=EN&cmsid=256) (accessed between 11 July 2005 and 8 August 2005).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Romano Prodi, Report to the European Parliament on the Spring European Council, Brussels, 26 March 2003. See also, Romano Prodi, "Europe and Ethics", Speech to the Conference on Politics and Morality, Vienna, 7 December 2002.

<sup>35</sup> Walker, *Inside/Outside*, p. 51.



foreign policy; and the exercise of responsibility as an offering of *hospitality* to others in EU foreign policy.

These foreign policy texts rely on the possibility of a collective subject of ethics and foreign policy; they require a ‘we’, an ‘our’, an ‘us’ which *can* act ethically. This subjectivity is conceived differently, however, in the British and EU texts. As Chapter IV shows, ‘Britain’ constructs itself as able to enact an ethics globally, while the ‘EU’ is far more circumspect in this regard, preferring to restrict itself to a regional role. Nonetheless, Chapter III illustrates the way in which both foreign policies construct subjectivity as the capacity of *taking responsibility* in world politics through foreign policy. It is this ‘ability to take responsibility’ around which British and EU representations of their own and others’ subjectivity undermines itself. A parallel reading of Britain’s ‘failing state’ discourse alongside Derrida’s portrayal of democracy as autoimmune reveals that a ‘successful’ subject of responsibility is also always already a ‘failing’ object. Similarly, a close reading reveals that the ‘we’ affirmed as subject is constantly shifting in the discourse, never allowing a stable representation of that which is capable of responsibility (subject) and that which is not (object). The subject of ethics and foreign policy is thus undecidably affirmed and denied as both possible and impossible, yet neither simply one nor the other.

As suggested above, British and EU foreign policy differ substantially in their representations of how responsibility is enacted. The British text focuses on the relatively straightforward responsibility to protect human life from tyrannical regimes in other countries, and the responsibility to save human life from poverty and disease by also saving failing (mainly African) states. Chapter IV outlines the way in which both descriptions of enacting responsibility are also necessarily *irresponsible*. The responsibility to protect works both for *and against* the ethics of a ‘humanitarian intervention’ to protect life. This can be demonstrated through the centrality of an apparently marginal case: the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Equally, the responsibility to save is irrevocably tied to both a responsible compassion for the other *as other*, and an irresponsible contempt for the other until it becomes the *same*. The possibility of ethics



and responsibility in foreign policy are irrevocably and undecidably tied to an unethical irresponsibility.

In contrast to the comparatively simple line taken in the British text, EU foreign policy enacts responsibility by offering *hospitality* to the countries and regions surrounding it. This hospitality, analysed in Chapter V, is offered through three policies: the policy of enlargement, the policy towards the Balkan countries and, latterly, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The different degrees of conditionality and entry into the European 'home' attached to these policies, however, helps illustrate what Derrida calls the two laws of hospitality. The *law* of hospitality demands an unconditional openness towards otherness, while the laws place conditions upon this hospitality. The fact that the latter needs the former (and vice versa) means that the *hostility* of conditions and questions is always installed in hospitality; ethical and responsible *hospitality* is always already an unethical, irresponsible *hostility*. This undecidability is equally constitutive of unconditional hospitality; allowing anyone and anything into one's home means that it is no longer one's home, but rather a place of hostility where one is held hostage.

If this thesis merely argued that ethics and foreign policy is neither possible nor impossible, but undecidably both and neither, this is where the analysis could rest. Both British and EU texts reveal this constitutive im-possibility and ir-responsibility. However, the implications of such undecidability could be taken as an excuse to further marginalise discussion of ethics and foreign policy. Undecidability potentially provides a new means, a new rationale, for such marginalisation. Such a position is directly opposed to the inspiration of this thesis: that the goal of an ethical foreign policy as a responsible relation towards otherness is worth preserving in the perfectibility of its promise. Thus, the opportunity of a movement *through* undecidability is proposed in Chapter VI, a movement which seeks to *maintain* the openness of undecidability as the condition of politics and ethics, while negotiating the closure of a decision.

Negotiation is outlined as a potential for individual, context-bound, ethico-political foreign policy decisions. It can, perhaps, best be conceived as an oscillating movement



between equally imperative injunctions: an undetermined and a fully determined subjectivity; a responsibility to all others and one other; an unconditional hospitality and its conditional form. The non-foundational foundation of any such negotiation is the dual duty of deconstruction: to remain open to otherness, or what Derrida calls the future-to-come, and yet to close to certain futures, and certain figures of otherness, through a decision which seeks to avoid the 'worst'. Far from granting the assurance of an ethical or responsible foreign policy, negotiation indicates the *may be* of a potential movement *through* its undecidability. This negotiated movement through is, *perhaps*, the best way to preserve the promise of an ethical foreign policy to come.

# *Chapter I*

## *Foreign Policy Analysis: Marginalising Ethics*

### *Introduction*

This chapter brings together two literatures in the study of international relations in order to situate the thesis: FPA and poststructuralist IR theory. These two less than coherent ‘bodies’ of work only significantly cross over in particular works of David Campbell<sup>36</sup> and Roxanne Lynn Doty.<sup>37</sup> The two literatures are selected for somewhat obvious reasons; the thesis analyses ‘foreign policy’ through poststructuralist, specifically Derridean, thought. However, this chapter does more than simply review the extant literature. It draws the two together in order to demonstrate not only *that* FPA ignores and marginalises the ‘ethical’, but also *how* it does so.

FPA is a field suffused with insecurities and identity problems. It is considered by many to be a sub-discipline of IR, indeed, Brian White asserts that “at one level at least, international relations consists of an interacting network of foreign policies”.<sup>38</sup> Margot Light makes the stronger claim that FPA and IR should be considered separate disciplines, as FPA seeks to open up the ‘black box’ of state decisions, while traditional IR theory takes the state as a given.<sup>39</sup> James Rosenau, who contributed most to putting FPA on the academic map, characterises FPA as a “bridging discipline” between the study of international relations and domestic politics, thus concerning itself with politics

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<sup>36</sup> Particularly in Campbell, *Writing Security*.

<sup>37</sup> Roxanne Lynn Doty, “Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Postivist Analysis of US Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines” *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 37, No. 3 (1993), and Roxanne Lynn Doty, *Imperial Encounters: The Politics of Representation in North-South Relations* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

<sup>38</sup> Brian White, “Analysing Foreign Policy: Problems and Approaches”, in Michael Clarke and Brian White (eds.), *Understanding Foreign Policy: The Foreign Policy Systems Approach* (Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1989), p. 2.

<sup>39</sup> Margot Light, “Foreign Policy Analysis”, in A.J.R. Groom and Margot Light (eds.), *Contemporary International Relations: A Guide to Theory* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1994), p. 94.



at *every* level.<sup>40</sup> However characterised, scholars have plainly announced their unease at the future of FPA. Charles Kegley for example thought that, though by 1980 FPA was not yet a ‘paradigm lost’, it advanced “haltingly and non-self-assuredly”.<sup>41</sup> Later, Steve Smith felt it necessary to question whether FPA was a “discredited pseudo-science”,<sup>42</sup> while even Margot Light suggested a “steady erosion” of a separate concept of foreign policy and FPA.<sup>43</sup> A 2002 edited volume queried whether FPA had a future at all.<sup>44</sup>

Regardless of the health of FPA as a thriving discipline, of greater interest to this thesis is its failure to account for the ethical. After all, if FPA concerns itself with politics at every level, with “the full range of individual and collective processes whereby people seek to give meaning and hope to their lives”,<sup>45</sup> one would perhaps expect it to have something to say about ethics. However, even an explanation as to *why* the issue is ignored generally fails to materialise. This chapter does not simply illustrate this marginalisation of the ethical in FPA; this could be easily done and would illuminate little. Crucially, it also asks *how* this marginalisation has been made possible. The claim is that while not tackling the ethical directly, different versions of FPA make assumptions which fold the ethical into their argument as something which can be excluded from debate.

The term ‘marginalising ethics’ is therefore used to mean two things: firstly, in a fairly simple sense, FPA fails to discuss what morally *ought* to be done in foreign policy; but in a second, more important sense, FPA ignores the fact that the way we think about foreign policy contains assumptions about ethics which themselves have ethical

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<sup>40</sup> James N. Rosenau, “Introduction: New Directions and Recurrent Questions in the Comparative Study of Foreign Policy”, in Charles F. Hermann, Charles W. Kegley, Jr, and James N. Rosenau (eds.), *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1987), p. 1.

<sup>41</sup> Charles W. Kegley, *The Comparative Study of Foreign Policy: Paradigm Lost?* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1980), p. 1.

<sup>42</sup> Steve Smith, “Theories of foreign policy: a historical overview” *Review of International Studies* Vol. 12, No. 1 (1986), p. 13.

<sup>43</sup> Light, “Foreign Policy Analysis”, p. 100.

<sup>44</sup> Ryan K. Beasley and Michael T. Snarr, “Domestic and International Influences on Foreign Policy: A Comparative Perspective”, in Ryan K. Beasley, Juliet Kaarbo, Jeffrey S. Lantis and Michael T. Snarr (eds.), *Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective: Domestic and International Influences on State Behaviour* (Washington DC: CQ Press, 2002), p. 345.

<sup>45</sup> Rosenau, ‘New Directions and Recurrent Questions...’, pp. 1-3.



implications. Our construction of 'foreign policy' is not value free, rather it necessitates certain concerns, methodologies, judgements and outcomes which may be ethically questionable. Insensitivity to this second marginalisation generally leads to, even justifies, the continued marginalisation of ethics in the first sense. For example, we shall see that the construction of 'foreign policy' as something we can scientifically quantify leads to the need to purge FPA of all "moral fervour" in order to achieve such scientism.<sup>46</sup> Thus, whether or not FPA is a 'paradigm lost', the study of ethics and foreign policy becomes a 'paradigm indefinitely deferred'.

This chapter proceeds by arbitrarily splitting FPA into 'conventional' analyses, from what Smith calls the US and British traditions of FPA,<sup>47</sup> and 'unconventional' analyses, which are usually of a constructivist orientation. Having outlined the dominant strains of conventional FPA, the first section draws out three ways in which their assumptions about the nature of international politics work to exclude and ignore the ethical. The constructivist turn, producing an unconventional approach to FPA, is examined in section two. While more attuned to the assumptions which exclude the ethical, certain presuppositions retained by unconventional FPA work to both limit its ethical scope and draw it back into the marginalisations performed by conventional FPA. Thus it is argued that the study of ethics and foreign policy requires a more thoroughgoing analysis than that offered by the dominant strains of FPA.

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<sup>46</sup> James N. Rosenau, "Moral Fervor, Systematic Analysis, and Scientific Consciousness in Foreign Policy Research", in James N. Rosenau, *The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy* (New York: The Free Press, 1971), p. 24.

<sup>47</sup> Steve Smith, "Foreign Policy Analysis: British and American Orientations and Methodologies" *Political Studies* Vol. 31, No. 4 (1983); Smith, "Theories of foreign policy".



## *Conventional Foreign Policy Analysis*

Conventional FPA arose out of a dissatisfaction with realist approaches to IR and in the 1950s and 1960s embraced behaviouralist methodology.<sup>48</sup> Its basis, Smith argues, was a belief that foreign policy can be treated as a phenomenon common to all states.<sup>49</sup> Thus certain assumptions were made and held to be beyond doubt – that all nations’ foreign policies were comparable, that patterns in behaviour were determined by identifiable factors, and that these determinants could be classed in terms of relative influence.<sup>50</sup> This section reviews the development of conventional FPA from three important works in its early years. Three critiques then reveal the constitutive assumptions which allow an ignorance of the ethical.

### *Conventional FPA and its Development*

Valerie M. Hudson’s recent historical survey of FPA singles out three “paradigmatic” works.<sup>51</sup> Arguably the most influential of these three, especially over the following two decades, was Rosenau’s ‘Pre-Theories and Theories of Foreign Policy’.<sup>52</sup> Though many developments were to be made on this general framework, Rosenau’s pre-theory “lies at the base of them all”.<sup>53</sup> The other two were a 1954 essay by Richard C. Snyder, H.W. Bruck and Burton Sapin,<sup>54</sup> which refocused the debate on decision making as the unit of analysis, and Harold and Margaret Sprout’s examination of ‘milieu’.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Smith, “Theories of foreign policy”, p. 16.

<sup>49</sup> Smith, “Foreign Policy Analysis”, p. 558.

<sup>50</sup> Kegley, *The Comparative Study of Foreign Policy*, p. 1.

<sup>51</sup> Valerie M. Hudson, “Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor-Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations” *Foreign Policy Analysis* Vol. 1, No. 1 (2005), p. 5.

<sup>52</sup> Originally published in 1966, reprinted as James N. Rosenau, “Pre-Theories and Theories of Foreign Policy”, in Rosenau, *The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy* (New York: The Free Press, 1971).

<sup>53</sup> Smith, “Foreign Policy Analysis”, p. 558.

<sup>54</sup> “Decision Making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics”, later reprinted in Richard C. Snyder, H.W. Bruck and Burton Sapin, *Foreign Policy Decision Making* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), pp. 14-185.

<sup>55</sup> “Man-Milieu Relationship Hypotheses in the Context of International Politics”, later expanded into Harold and Margaret Sprout, *The Ecological Perspective on Human Affairs: With Special Reference to International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965).



i) Pre-theories and the science of FPA

In his 'Pre-theories' essay, Rosenau states that a problem for FPA has been that it is "devoid of general theory".<sup>56</sup> While acknowledging that there is much variation and complexity of factors leading to foreign policy, "at the same time it is also true that the variability is patterned".<sup>57</sup> The reasons for FPA's failure, he suggests, are two basic shortcomings, one philosophical and the other conceptual.<sup>58</sup> Philosophically, the failure concerns the need for empirical materials to be "similarly processed" for theory to develop; "[t]here must be, as it were, pre-theory which renders the raw materials comparable and ready for theorizing."<sup>59</sup> Causation must be located and the elements must be ranked. Such "preliminary processing" has occurred in other social sciences which have developed theory but not in FPA, such that most researchers are unaware of their pre-theory.<sup>60</sup>

But what does a pre-theory look like? Basically, "all pre-theories of foreign policy are either five-dimensional or translatable into five dimensions".<sup>61</sup> These dimensions are where causation lies and include the individual (i.e. the characteristics unique to the decision makers), role (behaviour generated by the role occupied rather than the individual occupier), governmental variables (structures limiting or enhancing choices), societal factors (such as values, degree of national unity and industrialization etc.), and finally, systemic factors (non-human aspects of the external environment such as geography and aggressive ideologies of other states).<sup>62</sup> A pre-theory must then rank the "*relative potencies*",<sup>63</sup> or influence, of these factors. Though he observes that this will

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<sup>56</sup> Rosenau, "Pre-Theories and Theories of Foreign Policy", p. 99.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 106-107.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 108-109.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.



inevitably lead to many pre-theories, “it should be possible to discern patterns and draw contrasts” leading to a general theory.<sup>64</sup>

This philosophical failure to recognise pre-theories (the explicit ranking of variables in terms of causation) has been perpetuated, claims Rosenau, by conceptual failures. Even if materials are processed, they do not simply fall into meaningful patterns, “concepts are necessary to give them structure and thereby facilitate the formulation of if-then propositions”.<sup>65</sup> An ‘if-then’ proposition is crucial to theory building by stipulating ‘if this happens then this follows’. Two related conceptual failures are key: firstly, the outdated tendency to maintain a firm separation of national and international political systems, and secondly, the blindness to indications that political systems operate differently from one issue to another.<sup>66</sup>

To tackle the first problem, he offers the concept of a “*penetrated political system*”<sup>67</sup> which indicates the “presence of non-members who participate directly in a society’s politics”.<sup>68</sup> Examples include Vietnam, the Congo, Cuba, Japan and Germany after World War II. Penetrated systems are characterized not only by the existence of non-member participants but, more significantly, “by a shortage of capabilities on the part of the penetrated society”.<sup>69</sup> The non-members try to compensate for or take advantage of this shortage. Some penetration is “thoroughgoing” while others are limited to certain issue areas (such as British defence).<sup>70</sup>

The second conceptual problem is precisely this: issue-areas. There is a tendency to privilege the national level of action on all issues, but many are tackled by a range of actors at all levels interested in that one issue.<sup>71</sup> He splits the levels up into local (sub-national), national and international, showing that some issues are tackled by all levels,

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<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127 – emphasis in original.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 133-135.

others by just one. His point is that there is no reason to concentrate solely on the national level. Taking the two trends together (penetrated systems and issue-areas), Rosenau suggests “the radical conclusion that the boundaries of political systems ought to be drawn vertically in terms of issue areas as well as horizontally in terms of geographic areas”.<sup>72</sup> Thus, he tries to adapt his pre-theory to encompass a fourfold typology of issue-areas (including territorial, status, human resources and non-human resources), leading to a highly confusing table constituting his rough pre-theory.<sup>73</sup>

Rosenau acknowledges that the concepts he introduces “greatly complicate the task of theory building”, but suggests that this does not prevent the production of a general theory.<sup>74</sup> The elaboration of pre-theories did not, however, lead to a breakthrough in general theory. Nonetheless, in 1987 Rosenau introduces the co-edited *New Direction in the Study of Foreign Policy* by firstly noting the increasing complexity of the world<sup>75</sup> and then re-stating the belief that all foreign policy behaviour has a “common structure”, consisting of “discrete action initiated by one state and directed towards one or more targets in the world arena”.<sup>76</sup> This volume illustrates an important trend in conventional FPA which follows on from pre-theory: the increasing belief in ‘scientific’ methods. The hope was that this would eventually yield the Holy Grail – “a grand unified theory of all foreign policy behaviour for all nations for all time”.<sup>77</sup>

Despite the fact that no general theory had yet been produced via ‘scientific’ methods, there was no retreat from them. Neither was there a qualification or justification of their use. Rather, scientific methods were simply exercised. Indeed,

It is perhaps a measure of movement into a new, more mature era of inquiry that philosophical and methodological argumentation is conspicuously absent from these essays. Where earlier

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<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 148.

<sup>75</sup> See Rosenau, “Introduction: New Directions and Recurrent Questions...”, pp. 2-3.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>77</sup> Hudson, “Foreign Policy Analysis”, p. 9.



works were pervaded with efforts to clarify epistemological foundations and methodological premises on which the analysis rested, here such matters are largely taken for granted.<sup>78</sup>

Thus, Gregory Raymond tries to derive performance indicators to show the success of different foreign policies,<sup>79</sup> while Russell Leng presents a typology of military disputes which he graphs using measurements of time and “hostility score”.<sup>80</sup> This is seen as a step in the direction of discerning the causes and consequences of military disputes.<sup>81</sup> Perhaps the best example of this scientific method taken to the extreme is Dwain Mefford’s system of drawing parallels between crisis situations and the best analogy from history. An artificial intelligence machine can then be used to “piece together a path or contingency plan that leads from the description of the current situation to a terminal point”.<sup>82</sup> The ultimate goal of such a system, one can only suppose, is the programming of foreign policies such that decisions need no longer be taken. Information is simply fed into the artificial intelligence and the best analogical action is spat out.

## ii) Decision-making and the socio-psychological milieu

Snyder, Bruck and Sapin can be credited with giving FPA its focus on decision-making, rather than foreign policy outcomes.<sup>83</sup> Their aim was to explain the foreign policy *decision*. Snyder argued in 1962 that the enduring value of their framework would be: the concentration on the perceptions of decision-makers and their definition of the situation, the context and intervening variables; the interrelations of structure and process as well as decisional outcomes; and the combination of psychological and

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<sup>78</sup> Rosenau, “Introduction: New Directions and Recurrent Questions...”, pp. 5-6.

<sup>79</sup> Gregory A. Raymond, “Evaluation: A Neglected Task for the Comparative Study of Foreign Policy”, in Hermann et al. (eds.), *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy*, p. 98.

<sup>80</sup> Russell J. Leng, “Structure and Action in Militarized Disputes”, in Hermann et al. (eds.), *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy*, p. 183.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 198.

<sup>82</sup> Dwain Mefford, “Analogical Reasoning and the Definition of the Situation: Back to Snyder for Concepts and Forward to Artificial Intelligence for Method”, in Hermann et al. (eds.), *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy*, p. 24.

<sup>83</sup> Hudson, “Foreign Policy Analysis”, p. 6.



sociological levels of analysis in terms of individual and group decisions.<sup>84</sup> This work was, of necessity, less ‘scientific’ and calculative than Rosenau’s style of conventional FPA and rarely sought a truly general theory. It concentrated more on sociological and psychological methods and helped generate a key aspect of FPA: its interdisciplinarity.

An interdisciplinary approach to decisions was also very much a keystone of Sprout and Sprout’s work.<sup>85</sup> They, however, concentrated on what they called the “*psycho-milieu*” of the individual or (far more problematically for them)<sup>86</sup> the group making the decision. A ‘psycho-milieu’ is the way that a person perceives his human and non-human environment. It is made up “of *images* or *ideas*, derived from some sort of interaction between what he selectively receives from his milieu (via his sensory apparatus) and his scheme of values, conscious memories, and subconsciously stored experience”.<sup>87</sup> The inherent vagueness of this *some sort* of interaction has led to a great deal of literature trying to find the various ways in which different aspects of the ‘psycho’ and ‘milieu’ interact in foreign policy decision-making. Especially relevant were works by Martha Cottam and the psychologist Margaret G. Hermann,<sup>88</sup> as well as texts by Robert Jervis and Richard Cottam, trying to deduce the role of perception and images in foreign policy.<sup>89</sup> Such research was not confined to the US with an edited collection by British academics studying the impact of belief systems in foreign policy,<sup>90</sup> and Walter Carlsnaes’ examination of the role of ideology in a cognitive schema.<sup>91</sup>

The truly classic work of FPA to emerge from this interdisciplinary focus on decisions was that of Graham Allison. Originally published in 1971, *Essence of Decision* looks at

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<sup>84</sup> Richard C. Snyder, “Introduction”, in Snyder et al, *Foreign Policy Decision Making*, pp. 5-7.

<sup>85</sup> Sprout and Sprout, *The Ecological Perspective*, p. 24.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33-41.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>88</sup> See especially, Martha L. Cottam, *Foreign Policy Decision-Making: The Influence of Cognition* (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1986).

<sup>89</sup> Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976) and Richard Cottam, *Foreign Policy Motivation: A General Theory and a Case Study* (Pittsburgh PA: Pittsburgh University Press, 1977).

<sup>90</sup> Richard Little and Steve Smith (eds.), *Belief Systems and International Relations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988).

<sup>91</sup> Walter Carlsnaes, *Ideology and Foreign Policy: Problems of Comparative Conceptualization* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).



three ways of explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Three major policy decisions are separated out: the Soviet decision to send nuclear missiles to Cuba; the US decision to blockade Cuba; and the Soviet decision to withdraw the missiles from Cuba. These are then all explained in turn by three models of decision-making. Firstly, the 'Rational Actor Model' (RAM) which was dominant in the contemporary thought of 1971, if not now, on all (not just foreign) public policy.<sup>92</sup> Here the state in its totality is taken as a unitary actor who is assumed to act rationally in terms of their self interest (i.e. the 'national interest'). While not dismissing the 'Rational Actor Model',<sup>93</sup> its dominance is what Allison seeks to subvert by introducing two more nuanced models.

The second, 'Organisational Behaviour' model, takes issue with the image of government as a unitary actor. Instead, government is seen as a complex set of organisations each with its own standard operating procedure (SOP), which largely pre-determines behaviour beforehand.<sup>94</sup> The unit of analysis in foreign policy is no longer an anthropomorphised state, but an "organization".<sup>95</sup> This leads to complications in the RAM. An organisation can increase efficiency, create capabilities and constrain behaviour, but it can also take on its own logic.<sup>96</sup> Also, the organisation is able to define the problem to be solved, and the way the definition is posed often leads to an inevitable solution. Those defining the problem have much more control than the RAM allows. Another blow to 'rationality' arises from unprecedented issues, or issues that cut across different organisations. In these situations "interactive complexity" means the 'decision' which results from various SOPs is very different to what a unitary rational actor may have chosen.<sup>97</sup> The point is that the RAM is simply not sufficient to account for the complexity of policy.

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<sup>92</sup> Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (New York: Longman, 1999), p. 13.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 50-52.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 144.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 148.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.



The third model is the “heart and soul” of the book, attracting the most interest, attention and criticism.<sup>98</sup> The “Governmental Politics” model defines leaders (Presidents, Prime Ministers, Core Executives, Cabinets etc.) at the top of organisations as merely important players in competitive bargaining games. There are many players, each of whom (though less important than the leader) work on diverse issues with a range of different interests (national, organisational, personal and so on). These actors make government decisions through bargaining, “not by a single, rational choice but by the pulling and hauling that is politics”.<sup>99</sup> Priorities and perceptions of agents are shaped by their *positions* within the government, but unlike the simple routine SOPs, the identity of individual participants and the asymmetries of information between them also matters.<sup>100</sup> Predicting decision outcomes must take account of the participants,<sup>101</sup> the rules of decision making (vote needed, vetoes and so on),<sup>102</sup> who frames the issue or sets the agenda,<sup>103</sup> the influence of ‘group think’ (where group cohesion leads to drive for consensus)<sup>104</sup> and the complexity of joint action between departments and agencies.<sup>105</sup>

This complicates the RAM beyond recognition. Conventional FPA tends to favour models which *simplify* foreign policy, enabling the prediction of ‘outputs’ from given ‘inputs’.<sup>106</sup> The myriad inputs in the ‘Governmental Politics’ model are impossible to handle in this way. One small example can be taken from the model: section II (organising concepts), subsection B) (what factors shape players’ perceptions, preferences and stands on the issue), sub-subsection 2), includes personal, domestic and organisational “Goals and interests”.<sup>107</sup> Analysts would have to account for each player,

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<sup>98</sup> Jerel A. Rosati, “Ignoring the Essence of Decision Making: Review of *Essence of Decision*” *The International Studies Review* Vol. 3, No. 1 (2001), pp. 179-181.

<sup>99</sup> Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, p. 255.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 274.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 275-278.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 278-280.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 280-283.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 283-287.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 287-294.

<sup>106</sup> Charles A. Powell, James W. Dyson and Helen E. Purkitt, “Opening the ‘Black Box’: Cognitive Processing and Optimal Choice in Foreign Policy”, in Hermann et al. (eds.), *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy*, p. 205. See also Michael Clarke, “The Foreign Policy System: A Framework for Analysis”, in Clarke and White (eds.), *Understanding Foreign Policy*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>107</sup> Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, p. 298.



of whom there are thousands, including their *personal* interests in a policy, which may be subconscious. And this is only a tiny section of the model.

In his conclusion, Allison to some extent pre-empts this criticism by saying that the models are performing different tasks. While “at one level” they are competing explanations of the same occurrence, “at another” they are explaining different phenomena altogether.<sup>108</sup> Thus a microscope and a telescope produce different images “of the same fundamental reality”,<sup>109</sup> while “[t]he glasses one wears magnify one set of factors rather than another in ways that have multifarious consequences.”<sup>110</sup> Thus, for Allison, “[m]ultiple, overlapping, competing concentric models are the best the current understanding of foreign policy provides.”<sup>111</sup>

Conventional FPA had by the 1990s largely abandoned Rosenau’s search for a general theory of foreign policy. With the influence of the likes of Snyder et al., the Sprouts, Allison and those that followed, the emphasis tended towards theoretical pluralism as the best way to understand foreign policy, with each approach explicating at a different level of analysis.<sup>112</sup> Hudson suggests that, while IR was moving towards an “actor-general” approach (based on abstraction and contextless generalisations about state behaviour), FPA had moved towards “actor-specific theory” (concrete, contextual and complex).<sup>113</sup>

Conventional FPA had also increased its complexity by moving, in line with Allison’s different models, towards a multifactorial, multilevel, interdisciplinary, and integrative approach.<sup>114</sup> There has been a vast diffusion of work within FPA studies in the US along these lines.<sup>115</sup> This is not say that grand theorising has been permanently eschewed in favour of complexity. The most ambitious integrative computational analysis project yet, the second version of the Comparative Research on the Events of Nations (CREON2),

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<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 387.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 380.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 387.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 401.

<sup>112</sup> Beasley and Snarr, “Domestic and International Influences on Foreign Policy”, pp. 321-322.

<sup>113</sup> Hudson, “Foreign Policy Analysis”, p. 14.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>115</sup> See *Ibid.*, pp. 13-21, for a summary of contemporary FPA scholarship.



was attempted in the 1990s. This involved a model of constraining and enabling elements in the international system, combined with a context bound analysis (requiring the input of country experts), all routed through a theoretical component called the “ultimate decision unit”.<sup>116</sup> While now defunct, Hudson reflects upon this loss by asking “if we will ever see its like again in IR theory”.<sup>117</sup>

### *Ignoring the Ethical*

Implicit in the above discussion is the fact that with conventional FPA’s focus on conceptualising ‘foreign policy’, it completely ignores questions of ethics. However, as outlined in the introduction, what is more important is to demonstrate the *way* that FPA achieves this marginalisation through its constitutive assumptions. This section outlines three methods by which conventional FPA has trained itself to ignore questions of ethics and foreign policy, making them appear irrelevant, unimportant and not something one should question.

#### i) ‘Why’ and ‘how’ questions

Roxanne Lynn Doty notes that much of the reason behind the way FPA contrives to ignore issues of power and, as this chapter argues, of ethics, is because of the questions it asks. Traditional FPA asks ‘why’ questions (why was this policy pursued?), the aim of its analysis being to show that the action/decision was predictable in the circumstances.<sup>118</sup> This claim is substantiated by Snyder et al.’s paradigmatic case for decision-making as a framework for viewing foreign policy.

[I]f one wishes to probe the ‘why’ questions underlying the events, conditions, and interaction patterns which rest upon state action, then decision-making analysis is certainly necessary. We

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<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>118</sup> Doty, “Foreign Policy as Social Construction”, p. 298.



would go so far as to say *that the 'why' questions cannot be answered without analysis of decision making.*<sup>119</sup>

In asking such 'why' questions, Doty points out, FPA takes the *possibility* that a particular decision could be made as unproblematic. In doing this, conventional FPA "presuppose[s] a particular subjectivity... a background of social discursive practices and meanings which make possible the practices as well as the social actors themselves".<sup>120</sup>

In contrast, Doty asks "*how-possible*" questions – how were, and are, the subjects, objects and interpretations in FPA socially constructed? Thus the questions become, 'how did policy A become the only reasonable course of action?' and, 'how did policy A come to appear necessary and policy B unthinkable?'<sup>121</sup> 'How' questions thus connect to an aspect of power ignored by 'why' questions, the productive feature that constitutes these subjectivities and relationships.<sup>122</sup> By only asking 'why' questions, FPA ignores the way that power operates to construct the world of foreign policy.

Doty uses the example of a 'family' to show the way that asking 'how' questions can reveal hidden power relations, the ethics of which can be marginalised by treating them as 'natural' or 'normal'. Thus, in a 'normal' family, the man is placed hierarchically above the woman. Meanwhile, the gay family is excluded as deviant and abnormal,<sup>123</sup> as not *really* a 'family'. But to treat this as a natural given ignores the way power works to fix these elements in discourse, and ignoring the work of power is to ignore the potential ethical implications of what it produces. By not questioning how the 'family' came to be *as such*, we manage to efface a question of familial ethics and whether the 'family' could be constructed differently.

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<sup>119</sup> Snyder et al., *Foreign Policy Decision Making*, p. 33 – emphasis in original.

<sup>120</sup> Doty, "Foreign Policy as Social Construction", p. 298.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 297-298.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 299.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 303.



Doty uses this ‘how’ questioning to illuminate the peculiarity of American counterinsurgency policy in the Philippines during the late 1940s. She reveals a representational conceptual system of differences in the policy discourse of the US at the time. This consisted of two opposing terms, one of which (the first) always referred to the US and Americans, the other always referring to the Philippines and Filipinos. For example, she finds reason/passion, political maturity/immaturity, parent/child, order/chaos, good child/problem child, good/evil.<sup>124</sup> This constituted a “cultural code within which foreign policy was discussed, organised and implemented”.<sup>125</sup> The world of foreign policy was thereby constructed such that a potentially unethical policy became seen as normal and right. The Philippines was variously represented as immature, childlike, evil and in chaos, thus there could surely be nothing morally questionable about a mature, patriarchal, order-bringing, good country intervening? Was it not their duty? But this representation was *constructed*, it was not a reflection of a ‘reality’. By ignoring this productive aspect of power, conventional FPA folds into itself unstated assumptions about the world, with significant consequences for ethics.

We can see the operation of ‘why’ questions covering unstated assumptions in Allison’s discussion of the Cuban Missile Crisis. He suggests that his aim is to look at an event we don’t understand and ask why it happened – why did the Soviet Union put missiles in Cuba, and why did the US react in the way it did?<sup>126</sup> Thus, he is only interested in the ‘US’ and ‘Soviet Union’; ‘Cuba’ is largely treated as a cipher, subject to the whims of the two superpowers. ‘Cuba’s’ reasoning is uninteresting and not worth examining. ‘It’ is an object, acted upon by two subjects, an empty space in which power politics was played out. In fact, like Rosenau, we could say that Allison treats Cuba as a “penetrated system”,<sup>127</sup> which itself is based on assumptions which marginalise the ethical.

The concept was formulated to try and overcome the conceptual shortcomings of the rigid national/international distinction. A ‘penetrated system’ is characterised most

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<sup>124</sup> Doty, *Imperial Encounters*, pp. 88-91.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>126</sup> Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, p. 2.

<sup>127</sup> Rosenau, “Pre-Theories and Theories of Foreign policy”, pp. 129-130.



significantly by “a shortage of capabilities”, thus non-members will penetrate this system in order to help, or take advantage of, the weak state.<sup>128</sup> Penetrated systems are thereby constituted by a *lack*, a *deficiency* that somehow makes them not a ‘whole’ or full ‘national system’. The examples he gives are either nations defeated in war (Japan and Germany post-World War II), communist countries (Cuba and Vietnam), hopelessly poor states (Congo), or formerly great empires (Britain).<sup>129</sup> While it is acknowledged that the US is penetrated, this is very different. The US is penetrated by those seeking aid and support, for the *opposite* reason – a “relative abundance” of capabilities.<sup>130</sup>

What results then is an apparently innocent separation of *penetrated* systems and *national* systems which works to impose a hierarchy on the world: at the top is the US marked by ‘abundance’, then come ‘normal’ national systems, and finally ‘deficient’ penetrated systems, marked by ‘lack’. Such separations are treated as existent in the material world so they remain unquestioned but, being *constructed*, this seemingly objective hierarchy has major ethical implications. It can justify any type of intervention (after all a penetrated system’s ‘lack’ leads to non-member participation anyway) from sanctions to blockades, counterinsurgency and regime change. By asking ‘why’ questions then, FPA creates a conceptual system with hidden ethical assumptions that justify ignoring questions of ethics and foreign policy.

## ii) Inside/Outside

One of the assumptions made by asking ‘why’ questions is that of a firm demarcation between the national and the international, the domestic and the foreign. Walker sees this as a definitive dichotomy in the structuring of IR thought.<sup>131</sup> As noted, however, FPA (and specifically Rosenau’s concept of the ‘penetrated system’) is introduced to escape

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<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 128-129.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.

<sup>131</sup> Walker, *Inside/Outside*.



the rigid national/international distinction, which is seen as breaking down.<sup>132</sup> In this way, FPA may be thought to evade the logic of inside/outside which has significant implications for ethics. However, conventional FPA in fact works to perpetuate this distinction and with it the deferral of the analysis of ethics and foreign policy.

In 'Pre-theories', Rosenau confirms the inside/outside division by marking penetrated systems, as we have seen, by 'lack,' weakness, abnormality, illness; as he says, penetration lasts as long as the deficiency.<sup>133</sup> Like China from the 1960s, a society can cure itself by regaining lost capabilities. But, if penetrated systems are *abnormal* then the norm remains *national* systems. In this way national and international, inside and outside, is maintained, even while it is questioned. Such distinctions only fail to operate for those states which are abnormal and weak – for those seen as 'normal' the distinction stands. Thus, when discussing 'issue-areas' Rosenau still refers to local, national and international, restating and confirming the distinction even while he claims to dispute it.<sup>134</sup>

Similarly in *New Directions*, Rosenau notes the erosion of the internal/external divide, claiming that domestic and foreign policy have become "functions of each other as to make them virtually indistinguishable".<sup>135</sup> And yet FPA persists in distinguishing between the two: Powell et al. continue to see the goal of FPA as opening up the 'black box' of the state, looking *inside* as opposed to IR which looks *outside*;<sup>136</sup> Kegley differentiates internal and external conditions on decisions.<sup>137</sup> Even those stressing the role of environment on foreign policy systems, such as Christopher Farrands, claim that domestic and international environments are separated because "the nature of politics within the state is very different from politics in the international arena".<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>135</sup> Rosenau, "Introduction: New Directions and Recurrent Questions...", p. 4.

<sup>136</sup> Powell et al., "Opening the 'Black Box'", p. 205.

<sup>137</sup> Charles W. Kegley, Jr, "Decision Regimes and the Comparative Study of Foreign Policy", in Hermann et al. (eds.), *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy*, pp. 248-249.

<sup>138</sup> Christopher Farrands, "The Context of Foreign Policy Systems: Environment and Structure", in Clarke and White (eds.), *Understanding Foreign Policy*, pp. 85-86.



Wæver notes this tendency in FPA to question the domestic/international distinction and yet, through a failure to replace it with another concept, FPA continues to lean on it.<sup>139</sup> The domestic/foreign, national/international, inside/outside distinction remains in place as a fundamental element of the way in which conventional FPA's knowledge of the world is constructed. Hence the study of foreign policy is always a "bridging discipline" between *domestic* politics and *international* relations.<sup>140</sup> It is a bridge that joins the two, yet by reinstating the difference between them such that they *need to be joined*, it is a bridge that crucially reinforces their separation and difference.

But how does this relate to the marginalisation of the ethical? The reinstatement of the inside/outside distinction works to exclude questions of ethics from FPA via what Richard Ashley calls the realist 'double move'.<sup>141</sup> Firstly, a spatial relation of *difference* is invoked: domestically the state's internal autonomy is maintained and thus we have the potential for ethical community; outside the state is considered different however, discernible by different forces, (dis)orders and anarchy. Thus, Michael Smith's separation of influences on foreign policy systems includes, as different points, internal political *order*<sup>142</sup> and international *change*.<sup>143</sup> Order is thus an internal characteristic, *inside*, while change and instability is external, *outside*. This move of difference is underlined further by David Allen as he tries to define the international environment:

If we take the state as our central focus of attention, within which the foreign policy-making process is located, then the international environment is limited by the territorial boundaries of the state and all that falls outside those boundaries, and hence *outside the formal authority of the state, makes up the external environment*.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Ole Wæver, "Resisting the Temptation of Post Foreign Policy Analysis", in Walter Carlsnaes and Steve Smith (eds.), *European Foreign Policy: The EC and Changing Perspectives in Europe* (London: Sage, 1994), p. 252.

<sup>140</sup> Rosenau, "Introduction: New Directions and Recurrent Questions...", p. 1.

<sup>141</sup> Richard Ashley, "The Geopolitics of Geopolitical Space: Towards a Critical Social Theory of International Politics" *Alternatives* Vol. 12, No. 4 (1987), p. 413.

<sup>142</sup> Michael Smith, "Comparing Foreign Policy Systems: Problems, Processes and Performance", in Clarke and White (eds.), *Understanding Foreign Policy*, pp. 193-194.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 196-197.

<sup>144</sup> David Allen, "The Context of Foreign Policy Systems: The Contemporary International Environment", in Clarke and White (eds.), *Understanding Foreign Policy*, p. 60 – emphasis added.



Thus, despite acknowledged difficulties in rigid delimitation, boundaries between internal and external continue to exist and have meaning for Allen,<sup>145</sup> via an assertion of difference: within the state there is *authority*, outside there is none.

This spatial move of *difference* then justifies the second move: a temporal relation of *deferring* the domestic community's "essential project for a universal and timeless national unity".<sup>146</sup> The ethical community always has its *historical* margins despite its universal aspirations; beyond these its project must be deferred.<sup>147</sup> Without the authority of the state, the safety and community available on the inside, the outside can only defer ethics until authority is established outside the state. As Walker sees it, in a more genealogical study of the development of IR theory, the lack of community *outside* the state was "taken to imply the impossibility of history as a progressive teleology" in the international.<sup>148</sup>

Thus the marginalisation of the ethical is no longer surprising. The world is constructed by conventional FPA such that the ethical is irrelevant to foreign policy and FPA. As Walker notes, the only alternative is,

... an affirmation of the hope that someday, somehow, all that is presumed to be possible inside maybe extended to the outside – a hope that is constantly deferred, and indeed can only be specified as a condition of its own impossibility in anything other than the bounded space of the sovereign state.<sup>149</sup>

At best FPA through its entrenching of the inside/outside divide produces the hope of an indefinite *deferral* of ethics. But such a hope is far from 'scientific', as we shall see. The 'given-ness' of spatial relations in conventional FPA works to exclude the ethical, or at least marginalize and defer it. It is not acknowledged that, as Lefebvre points out,

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<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>146</sup> Ashley, "The Geopolitics of Geopolitical Space", pp. 412-413.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> Walker, *Inside/Outside*, p. 63.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.



“[s]pace is political”, a product of political processes and filled with ideologies.<sup>150</sup> Far from unproblematic backdrops, conceptions of space and time are discursively constructed, ethically problematic products of power relations.

iii) ‘Science,’ calculation and ‘moral fervour’

The final way (that this chapter examines) in which the ethical is excluded from debate is through the use of ‘science’. Michael Dillon claims that orthodox IR has “become the epitome of the closure of political thought” by relying on “technologised instrumentalisation of its representative-calculative thought”.<sup>151</sup> Conventional FPA exceeds IR in this regard. The aim here is not to suggest that ‘scientific methodologies’ are inappropriate for the study of social phenomena, but rather to show that the attempt to make FPA ‘scientific’ and rigorous has inevitable exclusionary consequences for ethics. This happens in two ways: firstly, by the initial urge towards scientific method and, secondly, through the ‘calculation’ of policies and decisions.

Firstly, to establish the rigorous study of ‘foreign policy’ Rosenau begins by overtly excising all discussion of ‘ethics’ and ‘morality’. Rosenau condemns the “bewildered simplicity and moral fervour” which marks much early comment on foreign policy.<sup>152</sup> Whereas domestic issues invite an academic invocation of the complexity of the issue, foreign policy “seems to invite the abandonment of scholarly inclinations”.<sup>153</sup> Asked about Vietnam or the Middle East, scholars will too often give “an unqualified answer – one that derives from moral judgement, assumes motivation, and simplifies causation”.<sup>154</sup> Rosenau’s subsequent plea for “scientific” consciousness in the study of foreign policy is an expression of how FPA dismisses questions of morality and ethics in favour of ‘rigour’ and ‘science’.

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<sup>150</sup> Henri Lefebvre, quoted in Walker, *Inside/Outside*, p. 128.

<sup>151</sup> Michael Dillon, *Politics of Security: Towards a Political Philosophy of Continental Thought* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 4.

<sup>152</sup> Rosenau, “Moral Fervor, Systematic Analysis, and Scientific Consciousness...”, p. 24.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*



Secondly, this exclusion is continued by the calculative thought which flows from the ‘scientific’ attempt to quantify foreign policy. As Rosenau says, from 1987 at least conventional FPA had stopped debating philosophical and methodological issues and began to just practice them.<sup>155</sup> Some conventional FPA scholars, as we saw above, sought “a grand unified theory of all foreign policy behaviour” through such quantification.

Some set of master equations would link all the relevant variables, independent and dependent, together, and when applied to massive databases providing values for these variables, would yield  $r^2$  approaching 1.0. Although the goal was perhaps naïve in its ambition, the sheer enormousness of the task called forth immense efforts in theory building, data collection, and methodological innovation that have few parallels in IR.<sup>156</sup>

Funding from the US government poured in to set up projects for the collection and categorization of data; projects such as the WEIS (World Event/Interaction Survey), COPDAB (the Conflict and Peace Data Bank) and CREON (Comparative Research on the Events of Nations), some of which live on.<sup>157</sup> These then led to the development of similarly acronymic “computerized decision aids and analysis packages”, such as EWAMS (Early Warning and Monitoring System), CACIS (Computer-Aided Conflict Information System) and XAIDS (Crisis Management Executive Decision Aids).<sup>158</sup>

With this evidence, we can use Dillon’s critique of the way IR has shunned any kind of truly “political” analysis in favour of examining “the technology of calculative order”<sup>159</sup> to show that conventional FPA has taken such thinking to the extreme. The aim of conventional FPA is to study what is calculable. It has to make what *could* be an ethico-political matter of openness and the contestation of limits<sup>160</sup> into a technology such that it can be quantifiably studied. Thus, the moment of the *political* and *ethical* is

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<sup>155</sup> Rosenau, “Introduction: New Directions and Recurrent Questions...”, pp. 5-6.

<sup>156</sup> Hudson, “Foreign Policy Analysis”, p. 9.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>159</sup> Dillon, *Politics of Security*, p. 53.

<sup>160</sup> Jenny Edkins, *Poststructuralism and International Relations: Bringing the Political Back In* (Boulder Co: Lynne Rienner, 1999), p. 126.



marginalised because they are what *cannot* be calculated and technologised, but must rather be kept open to contestation.<sup>161</sup> The importance of keeping the ethical and political from becoming such a technology will be discussed further from a specifically Derridean perspective in Chapter VI.

To summarise the argument of this first section, conventional FPA, despite its internal dissimilarities, shares similar assumptions which effectively train it to ignore and marginalise any discussion of ethics and foreign policy. Firstly, such marginalisation is achieved through only asking ‘why’ questions, not inquiring as to how the subjects, objects and the relationships of power between the two are constituted as such in discourse. This failure leads to the unquestioned acceptance of, for example, certain states being characterised as ‘penetrated’ through lack and deficiency. Secondly, the first failure has led to the re-entrenchment of the national/international, inside/outside distinction which FPA aimed to question. The implications of the division, as Ashley and Walker put it, are a deferral and ignorance of the ethical project for the ‘international’ (which is achievable for the community of the domestic) until order is achieved. Thirdly, the desire to firstly make FPA rigorously scientific (which demanded an excision of all ‘moral fervour’) and secondly, to make decisions the result of calculative, computational thought (which closes all ethical and political discussion), leads to a further marginalisation of ethics. These critiques interact and are not wholly separable. They come together by revealing the implicit, and sometimes explicit, training of FPA to ignore questions of ethics and foreign policy.

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<sup>161</sup> Dillon, *Politics of Security*, p. 52.



## *Unconventional Foreign Policy Analysis*

Ole Waever, as early as 1990, argued that FPA which took into account the ideational (such as that influenced by Sprout and Sprout) should extend its theorisation to other ideational factors relevant to foreign policy, those “not in the individuals but in between them in a specific discourse space – the political sphere”.<sup>162</sup> This focus on discourse and socially constructed meaning brings what has been termed here ‘unconventional’ FPA to the asking of ‘how’ questions, in addition to ‘why’ questions.<sup>163</sup> As such, we could say that ‘unconventional’ FPA includes both constructivist approaches (such as Waever) and the poststructural analyses of Roxanne Lynn Doty and David Campbell. However, it has been ‘constructivist’ FPA which has come to define an *acceptable* form of unconventional FPA, mirroring the way constructivism has been accepted into the IR mainstream.<sup>164</sup>

This section outlines some key components of broadly constructivist unconventional FPA. Unlike conventional FPA, there are no paradigmatic works, or clear research projects; indeed, there is not *one* constructivism, but many.<sup>165</sup> As such, the summary in this section self-consciously constructs an artificial coherence. An examination of the ways in which this FPA still contrives to ignore and marginalise the ethical ensues. Once again, it is evident from the summary that there is little attention given to ethics and foreign policy. It is argued through three critiques that the desire of constructivist FPA to maintain its middle ground between conventional and poststructural approaches leads it to retain certain assumptions which limit its ability to take ethics into account.

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<sup>162</sup> Ole Waever, “Review essay: The Language of Foreign Policy” *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 27, No. 3 (1990), p. 336.

<sup>163</sup> Jennifer Milliken implies this in observing that discursive studies in IR tend to examine the “power/knowledge nexus” in “a form of critical theorizing”. Jennifer Milliken, “The Study of Discourse in International Relations: A Critique of Research and Methods” *European Journal of International Relations* Vol. 5, No. 2 (1999), p. 225.

<sup>164</sup> For such a welcome to the mainstream, see Stephen Walt, “International Relations: One World, Many Theories” *Foreign Policy* Iss. 110 (1998), pp. 29-46.

<sup>165</sup> Steve Smith, “Foreign Policy is What States Make of It: Social Construction and International Relations Theory”, in Vendulka Kubalkova (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2001), pp. 39-40.



### *Constructivist FPA*

The influence of constructivism in its relatively short life in IR can be summed up by the opening line of Stefano Guzzini's formative article: "[w]hat a success story!"<sup>166</sup> Stephen Walt has even elevated constructivism to become one of the three 'pillars' (along with realism and idealism) on which the study of IR rests.<sup>167</sup> Emmanuel Adler argues that the reason for this success is that constructivism occupies the "true middle ground between rationalist and relativist interpretive approaches".<sup>168</sup> Constructivism thus gives "added value" to IR through its emphasis on "the ontological reality of intersubjective knowledge" and the "epistemological and methodological implications of this reality".<sup>169</sup> However, constructivists crucially reject what Adler calls the poststructuralist "relativist stance" in which "only the organisation of discourse really matters".<sup>170</sup>

Constructivism, contrary to conventional FPA which purports to take the world as it finds it, "involves seeing the world as inextricably social and material, that is, seeing people in their world as makers of their world, and seeing the world as a never-ending construction project".<sup>171</sup> Thus meaning is *created*, it does not *just* depend on an external reality but also an intersubjective social reality made possible by social communication.<sup>172</sup> As Nicholas Onuf puts it, "we *make* the world what it is, from the raw materials that nature provides".<sup>173</sup> This meaning is located "in specific discursive fields – and not just in bilateral subject-object relationships".<sup>174</sup> This is one of the 'middle grounds' constructivism looks to seize: between materialism and idealism.

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<sup>166</sup> Stefano Guzzini, "A Reconstruction of Constructivism in International Relations" *European Journal of International Relations* Vol. 6, No. 2 (2000), p. 147.

<sup>167</sup> Walt, "International Relations", p. 38.

<sup>168</sup> Emmanuel Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics" *European Journal of International Relations* Vol. 3, No. 3 (1997), p. 322.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 322-323.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 324.

<sup>171</sup> Vendulka Kubalkova, "A Constructivist Primer", in Kubalkova (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, p. 58.

<sup>172</sup> Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground", p. 326.

<sup>173</sup> Nicholas Onuf, "Constructivism: A Users Manual", in Vendulka Kubalkova, Nicholas Onuf and Paul Kowert (eds.), *International Relations in a Constructed World* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), p. 59.

<sup>174</sup> Waever, "Review essay: The Language of Foreign Policy", p. 336.



Crucially, constructivists accept the notion of a real world, but see it as “not entirely determined by physical reality”, it is “socially emergent.”<sup>175</sup>

Rather than foreign policy being based on decisions or events in the world taken *as it is*, constructivists analyse the way the world is created as it is *by* foreign policy. Thus, in Doty’s terms, they are not just asking *why* a certain foreign policy decision was made, *but how* it was possible, how the world was constructed to make it possible.<sup>176</sup> The basis for Onuf’s conception of a ‘policy’ is therefore the importance of language. “In representing the way things are and how they work in relation to each other, language makes things (including ourselves as agents) what they are by making the world (any world of social relations) what it is.” Policies “exist only when we put our intentions into words and frame courses of action, or plans, to achieve them”.<sup>177</sup> Policies literally create rules and norms which make the world of agents and intentions “what it has become and can ever be”.<sup>178</sup>

Foreign policy makers, through the use of language, both make/construct the world, and are made/constructed by it. Constructivists of a specifically ‘rule-oriented’, Onufian bent, thus concentrate their analysis on that which connects the two – various categories of rules, practices and institutions resulting from the interactions of ‘foreign policy maker’ and ‘world’.<sup>179</sup> Foreign policy is translated into these constructivist categories and this enables, for example, Vendulka Kubalkova’s assessment of how Soviet ‘New Thinking’ fares alongside other explanations for the end of the Cold War;<sup>180</sup> Gonzalo Porcel Quero’s analysis of how Franco’s regime changed its foreign policy throughout its reign;<sup>181</sup> Michel Collier’s examination of why Latin American anti-corruption policy

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<sup>175</sup> Adler, “Seizing the Middle Ground”, p. 324.

<sup>176</sup> Doty, “Foreign Policy as Social Construction”, pp. 297-298.

<sup>177</sup> Nicholas Onuf, “Speaking Policy”, in Kubalkova (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, p. 77.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>179</sup> Onuf, “Constructivism: A Users Manual”, p. 59.

<sup>180</sup> Vendulka Kubalkova, “Soviet ‘New Thinking’ and the End of the Cold War”, in Kubalkova (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, pp. 99-145.

<sup>181</sup> Gonzalo Porcel Quero, “Thus Spoke Franco: The Place of History in the Making of Foreign Policy”, in Kubalkova (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, pp. 146-172.



failed;<sup>182</sup> and Shiping Zeng's presentation of adjustments in Chinese and Taiwanese foreign policy according to changing identities.<sup>183</sup>

Kubalkova argues that constructivists do not offer a theory of foreign policy *per se* (certainly in the sense that conventional FPA looks to), but rather help make sense of what has been learnt from other theoretical perspectives by examining what lies beneath and between such findings.<sup>184</sup> Thus while many analyses such as Henrik Larsen's<sup>185</sup> make use of discourse analysis, this is not the only perspective that can be used by constructivists. For instance, Collier uses rational choice theory as part of a constructivist approach examining Latin American anticorruption policy<sup>186</sup> without this making his analysis any less constructivist.

Arguably, due to the focus on language which forms the basis of many unconventional analyses of foreign policy, discourse analysis is an especially suitable method. Hence Ole Waever's stress upon the importance of national discursive spaces; the way that "meaning is generated and structured in a national context".<sup>187</sup> For a policy to be meaningful, he argues, it must 'fit' the discourse. Some policies are excluded "since they go against the whole national repertoire of political key terms and connotations".<sup>188</sup> While not *causing* foreign policies, national discursive structures help shape a state's foreign policy; they "explain the directions and forms that foreign policy can take for a specific state if it is to remain politically meaningful in its national context".<sup>189</sup>

Larsen extends the idea of national discursive spaces in his examination of British and French policies towards Europe in the 1980s. He begins by critiquing the use of

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<sup>182</sup> Michael W. Collier, "Failed Policy: Analyzing Inter-American Anticorruption Programs", in Kubalkova (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, pp. 173-202.

<sup>183</sup> Shiping Zheng, "Making Sense of the Conflict Between Mainland China and Taiwan", in Kubalkova (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, pp. 203-226.

<sup>184</sup> Kubalkova, "A Constructivist Primer", p. 71.

<sup>185</sup> Henrik Larsen, *Foreign Policy and Discourse Analysis: France, Britain and Europe* (London: Routledge, 1997).

<sup>186</sup> Collier, "Failed Policy: Analyzing Inter-American Anticorruption Programs".

<sup>187</sup> Waever, "Resisting the Temptation of Post Foreign Policy Analysis", pp. 254-255.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 254.



psychological approaches in conventional FPA. They are, he claims, mainly appropriate for analysing crisis decision making, while tending to treat belief systems in a positivistic way and see language as a transparent medium for conveying meaning.<sup>190</sup> In contrast, Larsen sees meaning as dependent on the *discourse* in which it is used. There is no general system, but specific “systems of values and rules in a given linguistic context can broadly be defined as a discourse”.<sup>191</sup> This does not mean he is seeking to replace FPA with a purely discourse analysis based approach. He makes it very clear that discourse is only “one possible source of foreign policy”.<sup>192</sup> As such, despite Larsen’s and Waeber’s use of the poststructuralist thinker Michel Foucault, both limit his thought on the impact of discourse for constructivist ends.

Following Foucault, Larsen presents discourse as not just a derivation from social power but also its expression. By and large individuals must adapt to the societal level of meaning, the discursive formations which gather around societal themes. While Foucault looks at themes such as madness and sexuality, Larsen looks at the formations around concepts of ‘Europe’, ‘nation/state’, ‘security’ and the nature of the international system. The changes and developments around these key themes are used to reveal how British and French foreign policy towards Europe changed in the 1980s. Discourse is here a particular historical instance of a “discursive formation”; while change in discursive formation (which could be seen as a complete change *of* discourse) is rare, change *in* the discourse *around* these formations and themes is possible.<sup>193</sup> Discourses are socially reified through discursive practices, of which foreign policies are a part. In other words, foreign policies, as stated earlier, help to construct the world *as it is*.

The small but growing literature of unconventional, constructivist FPA, of which a flavour has been given above, is an interesting advance upon the ‘why’ questions of conventional FPA. These brief illustrations reveal the way constructivism works to carve itself a middle-ground upon which to ask ‘how’ the world of foreign policy is

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<sup>190</sup> Larsen, *Foreign Policy and Discourse Analysis*, pp. 5-9.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 14-16.



constructed. As such, one would perhaps expect it to critique conventional FPA in a similar way to poststructuralists: for making assumptions which allow a particular construction of the world to be reified with all its consequences for ignoring ethics. As demonstrated below, however, certain assumptions prevent constructivists from making this step into ethics and foreign policy. Unconventional constructivist FPA, while promising much, also trains itself through its assumptions to marginalise questions of ethics and foreign policy.

### *Marginalising Ethics*

Despite moving away from the background assumptions of conventional FPA (with the crucial claim being that the social world is a construction), constructivist FPA continues to provide little analysis of the ethical.<sup>194</sup> Kubalkova, for instance, stresses that Soviet interests in the late 1980s began to be defined in “moral terms” and that ‘New Thinking’ gave Gorbachev a “moral platform”,<sup>195</sup> but there is no questioning, problematization or analysis of the ‘moral’. It is simply accepted that, perhaps in contrast to realist power politics, ‘New Thinking’ simply *was* moral. Similarly, Karin Fierke sees New Labour’s announcement of an ethical dimension to its foreign policy as “an opportunity for its critics to hold it accountable for its promises”,<sup>196</sup> but does not question what a ‘moral’ basis for such criticism would look like.

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<sup>194</sup> There are at least two exceptions to this rule. Firstly, Nizar Messari’s analysis of the violent construction of US identity in its foreign policy in Kosovo – see, “Identity and Foreign Policy: The Case of Islam in U.S. Foreign Policy”, in Kubalkova (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World* – deals directly with questions of ethics. However, his analysis is inseparable from that of a poststructuralist. He acknowledges his debt to the poststructuralist literature of R.B.J. Walker, William Connolly, Michael Shapiro and, especially, David Campbell (p. 27). As such, his account of ethics and foreign policy does more to demonstrate the poststructuralist, rather than constructivist concern with the issue. Secondly, Xavier Guillaume develops a fascinating use of Bakhtinian dialogism as a way of making foreign policy an ethical politics of alterity – see, “Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations” *Millennium* Vol. 31, No. 1 (2002). However, Guillaume’s explanation relies on a re-boxing of the ‘state’ as chief narrator of identity (pp. 13-16), thus reinscribing his work in an IR, rather than FPA, tradition – hence the subtitle of his article.

<sup>195</sup> Kubalkova, “Soviet ‘New Thinking’ and the End of the Cold War”, p. 140.

<sup>196</sup> K. M. Fierke, “Constructing an ethical foreign policy: analysis and practice from below”, in Smith and Light (eds.), *Ethics and Foreign Policy*, p. 132.



This problem is fully recognised by Paul Kowert who acknowledges the need for a treatment of the ethical. Social science “is an ethical as well as explanatory process”,<sup>197</sup> but he admits that constructivists “are mostly silent about what kind of values constructivism itself might embrace. In this lacuna resides the untested promise of constructivism.”<sup>198</sup> Examining the values constructivism embraces is not a particularly helpful way of addressing the issue. Kowert’s deferral of the problem, however, is exacerbated by his subsequent effacement of it; when considering the future, instead of suggesting that constructivists test their ‘promise’ regarding ethics, he simply suggests they “push further down the same path”.<sup>199</sup> This fails to fill one with ‘promise’.

Three critiques of unconventional, constructivist FPA are now drawn out. These argue that the very importance placed on preserving its ‘middle-ground’ status means that constructivism is ill-equipped to examine ethics and foreign policy. The desire to continue as a success story means that constructivism continues to make key assumptions so as not to alienate conventional IR and FPA. The three critiques correspond to three assumptions that limit the scope of constructivism and the questions it asks of the constructed world of foreign policy. These assumptions are, firstly, of an extra- or non-discursive reality; secondly, the continued reliance on a distinction between the inside and outside, the national and the international; and, thirdly, the possibility of giving an empirically ‘better’ account of foreign policy decisions. The questions that these three assumptions restrict constructivist FPA from asking include those of ethics and foreign policy.

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<sup>197</sup> Paul Kowert, “Towards a Constructivist Theory of Foreign Policy”, in Kubalkova (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, p. 266.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 268.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 279.



i) Extra-discursive reality

The first limiting constructivist assumption is that of an extra-discursive reality. As stated above, constructivists see the world “as inextricably social *and material*”;<sup>200</sup> the world is made by us “from the raw material that nature provides”.<sup>201</sup> Because we create the world *from* something outside our own constructions, a reality which is not susceptible to our tinkering, there is a natural limit to our agency. Agents’ freedom “depends on their ability to recognise the *material* and social *limits* that apply to them”.<sup>202</sup> Adler thus describes constructivists as “ontological realists” in their belief that there is a material world which offers resistance when we act upon it.<sup>203</sup>

Given the centrality of this assumption for constructivism, it is often difficult to find discussion of how material reality affects foreign policy. When it is discussed, little certainty is displayed about its role. One example is Larsen’s discussion of the limiting impact of non-discursive structures. He claims that the value of studying discourse in foreign policy is that it can link up “non-discursive factors... other domestic structures, at least partly, work[ing] according to other logics than the political discourse”.<sup>204</sup> Of particular note here is the ‘*at least partly*’. What does this mean? Larsen points out that others will argue “the importance of any structural factor depends on how it is made sense of in the language”.<sup>205</sup> This is precisely what is argued in Chapter II – there are no factors that are not discursively mediated and thus no extra-discursive reality.

In places Larsen appears to agree, but later on he restricts this agreement, claiming that “*most ‘facts’ are, to a certain extent, mediated by the discourses of the social actors*”.<sup>206</sup> Thus “*certain* features constitute a framework for policy in an *almost* absolute sense because they can impose *concrete* restrictions”.<sup>207</sup> Non-discursive facts imposing limits

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<sup>200</sup> Kubalkova, “A Constructivist Primer”, p. 58 – emphasis added.

<sup>201</sup> Onuf, “Constructivism: A Users Manual”, p. 59.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65 – emphasis added.

<sup>203</sup> Adler, “Seizing the Middle Ground”, p. 333.

<sup>204</sup> Larsen, *Foreign Policy and Discourse Analysis*, p. 22.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183 – emphasis added.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23 – emphasis added.



are, for example, that a higher proportion of the French population works in farming than the British; Britain is more integrated into the global economy than France; Britain is an island, France part of the continent.<sup>208</sup> However, such ‘facts’ are also discursively constituted; their implications for foreign policy depend on how they are formed by the discourse and become part of social reality. They are *not* apolitical givens. At times Larsen agrees with this, saying that geographical and geopolitical factors are far from ‘given’ and “can be mediated quite differently”.<sup>209</sup> Yet, this clearly contradicts his claim that Britain being an island produces an *almost* concrete restriction on its foreign policy.

This is a fine line to tread; discourse *does* mediate facts but some facts are *almost absolute* and thus beyond language, while others are not. Why are the phenomena of sovereignty and national interest considered discursively constructed<sup>210</sup> but integration in the global economy is not?<sup>211</sup> At times discourses are “crucial filters through which the structural pressures are mediated”,<sup>212</sup> and at other times not. But no real distinction is provided as to when and where this applies. Doty’s criticism of Alexander Wendt’s constructivism seems equally applicable to Larsen: “[h]e seems to suggest that one should go with social construction when it is convenient and reify when it is not.”<sup>213</sup>

The significance of this claim to a non-discursive reality is that ‘reality’ can be *used*, and any such use is, as Maja Zehfuss points out, never value-neutral.<sup>214</sup> Thus, if there appears to be a limit to our conceptualisations of foreign policy, such as the limit of an impossible ethicality, there is a tendency to blame this on the ‘reality’ that constructivism allows for. For example, ethics and foreign policy may be impossible due to the ‘realities’ of an anarchic international system, or because of resource scarcity. Thus, any “assertion of an independently existing reality, which in itself cannot be

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<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197.

<sup>213</sup> Roxanne Lynn Doty, “Desire all the way down” *Review of International Studies* Vol. 26, No. 1 (2000), p. 138.

<sup>214</sup> Maja Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations: The Politics of Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 242.



proved and seems to demand no proof, works to support particular political positions and to exclude others from consideration”.<sup>215</sup>

This potential marginalisation of the ethical through a ‘reality’ imposing “material constraints” is illustrated by Kowert:

This world may be ontologically dependent on knowing and speaking subjects, but it exists independently from them. It is possible to conceive of limits on global oil reserves, for example, in different ways: as a *constraint* on economic development or, if one lives in Qatar or Saudi Arabia, as an *opportunity* for development. Yet it is not useful – it is scarcely meaningful – to conceive of the planet’s oil reserves as *unlimited*; the material world penetrates the social too much for that.<sup>216</sup>

However, if we question the existence of an extra-discursive ‘reality’ of oil reserves, is this tantamount to the claim that oil reserves are unlimited? Do we even need to take a position on the ‘actual’ level of oil reserves? As Zehfuss notes, Onuf (like Kowert) believes we cannot leave our constructions, so what does it matter if there is something *beyond* them? “Even if there was, it could never matter to us other than within our constructions. Even if material reality imposed a limit, what is significant is how we conceptualise this limit.”<sup>217</sup>

The problem is essentially one of questions asked. Claiming a ‘reality’ *sets a limit* upon Doty’s ‘how’ questions, which reveal power relations and their ethical implications. When a reality is invoked we return to conventional FPA, answering ‘why’ questions. Why did Britain enact a certain policy? Because it is (pace Larsen) an island or more integrated into the global economy than France,<sup>218</sup> or (pace Kowert) because oil reserves are limited. But if we ask how such “material constraints” were constructed, what becomes important is how limited oil reserves are *represented* – for example, as an *opportunity* or a *constraint*. There is no necessary causation as ‘reality’ can be

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<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>216</sup> Kowert, “Towards a Constructivist Theory of Foreign Policy”, p. 276.

<sup>217</sup> Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 195.

<sup>218</sup> Larsen, *Foreign Policy and Discourse Analysis*, p. 23.



represented differently. Equally, what matters is how Britain's island status is *represented*, but as a 'fact' it cannot 'cause' any policy in the way that may be suggested. Thus, retaining a non-discursive reality limits unconventional FPA's ability to ask 'how' questions and allows it to slip back into the ethics-marginalising 'why' questions of conventional FPA.

It is important to observe that not all constructivists see material reality as so important. Guzzini, for example, while believing in a phenomenal world notes that we cannot have access to it independent of discursive practice.<sup>219</sup> He claims that, with the possible exception of Wendt, *all* constructivists are interested *only* in socially constructed facts – they are “agnostic” or “simply uninterested” in the material world out there.<sup>220</sup> Yet Onuf, Larsen and Kowert *do* see non-discursive reality as important. But why so, given that such a 'reality' cannot be proven and seems to affect nothing outside of discourse? Quite simply, “it is precisely a certain unproblematic acceptance of reality that has made the constructivist ‘success story’ possible”,<sup>221</sup> as it is based on constructivism claiming a “true middle ground” between rationalists and relativists,<sup>222</sup> materialism and idealism.<sup>223</sup>

Maintaining that there *is a reality out there* means that constructivist FPA can, as Guzzini puts it, resist “succumb[ing] to the sirens of poststructuralism”, which is “increasingly emptied of intelligible meaning”.<sup>224</sup> It is only by resisting such sirens that Adler can claim to have shown that constructivism is “compatible with good social science”.<sup>225</sup> Constructivists need reality to stay legitimate, as Pettman suggests, to ensure they do not suffer “the most effective of all criticisms, namely, calculated indifference”.<sup>226</sup> To avoid this indifference, 'reality' is used as a rhetorical gesture signifying the difference between constructivism and poststructuralism. There are few

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<sup>219</sup> Guzzini, “A Reconstruction of Constructivism in International Relations”, p. 159.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160.

<sup>221</sup> Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 250.

<sup>222</sup> Adler, “Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics”, p. 322.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 325-326.

<sup>224</sup> Guzzini, “A Reconstruction of Constructivism in International Relations”, p. 148.

<sup>225</sup> Adler, “Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics”, p. 248.

<sup>226</sup> Ralph Pettman, “Commonsense Constructivism and Foreign Policy: A Critique of Rule-Oriented Constructivism”, in Kubalkova (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, p. 250.



better illustrations of this than Ben Tonra's polemical mischaracterisation of a middle ground:

This constructivist turn does not go as far as post-structuralist approaches: those far countries of post-modernism where language is everything and there are no material constructs, only discourse. It does, however, offer a challenge to exclusively instrumental rationalistic accounts.<sup>227</sup>

Constructivists need to remain 'on-side' with conventionalist or rationalist accounts so that, as Guzzini admits, they are "*allowed* to become its [the middle-ground's] *legitimate* tenant".<sup>228</sup> Unconventional FPA, in an attempt to retain credibility with the conventional, falls back into assumptions which allow conventional FPA to marginalise the ethical. There is no better example than the inside/outside distinction.

ii) Re-instating inside/outside

This second critique is more an example of the first: the use of extra-discursive reality by unconventional FPA to reinstate a key assumption that works to marginalise the ethical in conventional FPA. The assumption is that of a divide between national and international, inside and outside, with the realist 'double move' described above (of *difference* between the two spheres, and a *deferral* of ethics until the community and order of the inside can be spread to the outside).

In his discussion of national discursive spaces, Larsen claims that although discourse does not have an *a priori* border on the other side of which it ceases to apply,

The key hypothesis in this book is, however, that the political discourse on the four concepts examined... here are, *national*, in other words that the state border represents the boundary of the political discourse.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Ben Tonra, "Constructing the Common Foreign and Security Policy: The Utility of a Cognitivist Approach" *Journal of Common Market Studies* Vol. 41, No. 4 (2003), p. 738.

<sup>228</sup> Guzzini, "A Reconstruction of Constructivism in International Relations", p. 148 – emphasis added.

<sup>229</sup> Larsen, *Foreign Policy and Discourse Analysis*, p. 24.



The implications of this for international politics is that each state has its own discourse, but there is no conflict *between* discourses because “there is no discursive field” for them to overlap.<sup>230</sup> National discourses are incommensurable resulting in their talking past one another. Larsen uses the Foucauldian image of discursive trees; some of the branches of the discourse may overlap (leading to common policies), but “it is only if discourses come from the same tree that we can talk about a real dialogue at the level of discourse”.<sup>231</sup> In consequence, dialogue results “only between policies, i.e. the more concrete elements”.<sup>232</sup> This incompatibility is a major obstacle to international cooperation. A saving grace is that common discourses can develop at the international level in terms of the rules and norms of international society, which “can be interpreted as an international discourse”.<sup>233</sup> But this remains different from the fundamentally “incompatible” national discourses.

To summarise, this division of discourse has three major points. Firstly, there are separate *incompatible national discourses* which may overlap to form common policies. Secondly, we have an *international discourse*, a discourse of international society. Thirdly, there is *no apparent relationship between the latter two*. Larsen illustrates this claim to national discourses throughout, but a very clear example is the differing policies of the French socialist government of the 1980s and the British Labour party *vis-à-vis* Europe. In this case, he claims, Labour “adhered to the dominant British discourse on Europe” despite French socialist enthusiasm. National discourses framed policy orientations and “to a large extent, ran across political ideologies”.<sup>234</sup>

Here we see the old national/international division is being reinstated by an unconventional, constructivist FPA, this time at the level of discourse. The borders of the state are now reified such that the *national* discourses, those that arise *inside* the state, are simply incommensurable and cannot talk to other *national* discourses, other *insides*.

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<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.



Instead, they can only communicate in their own, *international*, discursive field, *outside* the national. But can we really see things in such rigid terms? While it may be *useful* to think of foreign policies as formed by national discourses or texts, such boundaries are not ‘real’. State boundaries, after all, are also discursively mediated. Der Derian argues that, in world politics, “it is increasingly not what is inside or outside the core [state] that really matters: it is the map of the borders – the textualization of reality”.<sup>235</sup> Larsen’s approach ignores this textualization, treating borders as materially existent at the level of discourse.

Larsen thus reiterates the inside/outside distinction which structures conventional FPA. The result of this could easily be the positing of a *difference* between the national and international discourses, and a *deferring* of the ethical until national discourses become commensurable, or international discourse takes on the characteristics of the national. As above, the constructivist concern is rarely with the ethical but always with keeping itself separate from poststructuralism. Thus, Larsen proudly states that,

...in drawing on a methodology which is, to some extent, poststructuralist, one does not necessarily reach conclusions which challenge all modernist categories. The findings of this book have not challenged one of the key modernist categories – the state – a contrast to many postmodernist approaches which go under the label of deconstruction. This indicates that a poststructuralist approach does not necessarily lead to strongly postmodern conclusions.<sup>236</sup>

This embarrassment at using the poststructuralist methodology of Foucault (and coming to ‘postmodern’ conclusions – whatever that means) leads to the use of discourse analysis for conventional ends. In doing so, Larsen reifies the state through his claim of national discourses and a domestic and international realm, and thus partakes of the exclusion of the ethical from FPA.

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<sup>235</sup> James Der Derian, *Antidiplomacy: Spies, Terror, Speed and War* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p. 2.

<sup>236</sup> Larsen, *Foreign Policy and Discourse Analysis*, p. 199.



iii) 'Better' accounting

The final criticism to be made of unconventional FPA applies especially to those constructivists who, like Kubalkova and Onuf, wish to split intersubjective socially constructed reality into categories, such as rules, practices, institutions, and so on.<sup>237</sup> Familiar ways of talking are separated into these categories so that they can be more fruitfully analysed.<sup>238</sup> Yet what does this 'more fruitfully analysed' mean? Why are categories necessary for this? The answer appears to be tied up with what Jennifer Milliken suggests should be a goal of discourse analysis: "doing rigorous empirical research or developing better theories".<sup>239</sup> Karin Fierke puts it more succinctly when she observes that the goal of constructivism in IR must be "constructing a better account of the past."<sup>240</sup> This 'better accounting' essentially means that, once again, in seeking to separate itself from poststructuralism, constructivist FPA returns to conventional 'why' questions with all the power relations and ethical implications this marginalises.

Fierke examines the irony of the end of the Cold War; neither side *aimed* to achieve it, she notes, indeed neither side *wanted* it, and yet the Western 'we've won' explanation nevertheless became dominant.<sup>241</sup> Fierke suggests that all poststructuralists, such as Campbell, would have to say by way of explanation is that the "powerful have once again succeeded in marginalizing and silencing voices".<sup>242</sup> While this is in itself a "powerful argument" she points to two limits. Firstly, "it suggests the game is over", the dominant voice won. Secondly,

There is little critical about this account except to demonstrate that we are all writings of the propaganda apparatus of the powerful. It does not tell us *how* the marginalized would be given more space to speak. More importantly, it does not give us any criteria for coming up with a *better* account of what happened. The argument is that multiple stories can always be told,

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<sup>237</sup> Onuf, "Constructivism: A Users Manual", pp. 59-77.

<sup>238</sup> Kubalkova, "A Constructivist Primer", p.66.

<sup>239</sup> Milliken, "The Study of Discourse in International Relations", p. 228.

<sup>240</sup> Karin M. Fierke, "Critical Methodology and Constructivism", in Karin M. Fierke and Knud Erik Jorgensen (eds.), *Constructing International Relations: The Next Generation* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2001), p. 129.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*



although the story of the dominant tends to prevail. By contrast, we want to think about the criteria for constructing a better account of the past.<sup>243</sup>

It is crucial to understand the meaning of the end of the Cold War and how this “constitutes our understanding of what is possible or necessary in the future”.<sup>244</sup> But how to judge a ‘better’ narrative? She suggests that the ‘we won’ argument is of little use as it is an “interpretation imposed after the fact.” In contrast, her constructivist “conflicting games” argument is “‘better’... [as it] embeds the moves of any one actor in a larger intersubjective space and traces, over time, the transition from one game to another”.<sup>245</sup> Constructivists seek to categorise social reality because it gives them a better grasp of a slippery socially constructed reality and leads to *better* explanations of this reality.

Firstly, a parenthetical point is that Fierke has misunderstood Campbell’s writings. Far from suggesting that the ‘game is over’, Campbell opens up the Cold War to alternative discourses. He argues that those declaring an end to the Cold War (as Fierke does) assume that they know *what it was*. Labelling it as such makes it an unproblematic era, easy to understand.<sup>246</sup> Fierke, not Campbell, is implicated in suggesting the game is over. Also, her representation of Campbell as simply asserting that the dominant voice has prevailed on the Cold War, and not telling us how the marginalized voice can be given more space, is only possible if we ignore that part of his work which specifically problematizes dominant voices<sup>247</sup> *and* seeks to provide space for the marginalized.<sup>248</sup> Fierke’s analysis of Campbell, if nothing else, is very poor.

Secondly, we can ask what this ‘better’ account involves. Constructivist FPA does not hold up its explanations against an external reality, as does the conventional. Instead their explanations can be judged ‘better’ or ‘worse’ to the extent that they embed actors’

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<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 128-129.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>246</sup> Campbell, *Writing Security*, p. 15.

<sup>247</sup> David Campbell, *National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity and Justice in Bosnia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), especially chapters 5 and 6.

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, especially chapter 7.



moves in “a larger intersubjective space”.<sup>249</sup> Yet any account, even that of ‘we won’, could surely embed its explanation thoroughly in an intersubjective space. Then how could a judgement be made between which account is better? It seems unlikely that a quantification of intersubjective ‘embeddedness’ is possible, or even desirable. Thus, simply because the ‘we won’ account’s current formulation is poorly situated does not nullify it as the potentially ‘better’ account. What this desire for ‘better’ accounting reveals is in fact a desire to be able to still ask ‘why’ questions. The aim is not to explain ‘how’ power relations, subjects and objects were fixed through discourse and reified such that they are ethically unquestionable. Rather, the goal of a ‘better’ account is to ask ‘why,’ *really*, the Cold War ended, in order to disprove the ‘we won’ account.

Constructivist FPA, therefore, still seems to be *primarily* asking ‘why’ questions, even though its own ontology should open it up to more than this. The categorisation of social reality leads to the desire to give an impossible ‘better’ account in empirical terms. Campbell suggests that we look to interpretation “that acknowledges the improbability of cataloguing, calculating, and specifying ‘real causes’, concerning itself instead with considering the manifest political consequences of adopting one mode of representation over another”.<sup>250</sup> There are also *ethical* consequences, if the ethical and political can be split. Fierke argues, however, that the danger with this poststructuralist interpretation is that it fails to provide criteria to judge which account of the past is ‘better’.<sup>251</sup> However, Campbell (who seems to be something of a blind spot for Fierke) acknowledges there must be some mechanism for distinguishing between narratives, otherwise we have no reason to condemn holocaust denial; he suggests “moral grounds”.<sup>252</sup> Rather than accounts being tested by the extent to which they ‘fit’ a boundless intersubjectivity which works to marginalise ethical questioning, poststructuralism invokes precisely ethical criteria.

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<sup>249</sup> Fierke, “Critical Methodology and Constructivism”, p. 133.

<sup>250</sup> David Campbell, *Politics Without Principle: Sovereignty, Ethics and the Narratives of the Gulf War* (Boulder Co: Lynne Rienner, 1993), pp. 7-8.

<sup>251</sup> Fierke, “Critical Methodology and Constructivism”, p. 133.

<sup>252</sup> Campbell, *National Deconstruction*, p. 43.



Narratives, claims Campbell, should be tested from case to case without universal criteria “in terms of the relationship with the other they embody”.<sup>253</sup> Holocaust denial seeks to destroy the identity of the other; it is immoral because “by destroying the identity of the other we negate our own”.<sup>254</sup> Does this mean poststructuralists can judge between a ‘better’ and ‘worse’ account of the end of the Cold War? While there can be no ‘poststructuralist position’ on this, it seems likely that an examination of the discourses would produce agreement that Fierke’s ‘conflicting games’ argument is ‘better’ than the ‘we won’ thesis. However, this is not because the latter is an interpretation imposed after the fact, but because of the relationship to the other it embodies. ‘We won’ implies superiority of the self, it is a way of degrading and belittling the other to whom we are responsible.

The argument of this section is that unconventional, largely constructivist FPA has, through maintaining itself in a ‘middle-ground’ between conventional FPA and the poststructuralists, continued to make assumptions which work to marginalise discussion of ethics. This argument has been illustrated by three examples. Firstly, by upholding the explanatory power of an extra-discursive ‘reality,’ constructivism allows the reification of socially constructed power relations. This unquestioned ‘reality’ limits the ‘how’ questions unconventional FPA can ask; limiting its critical awareness constructivism works to marginalise ethical questions. Secondly, the above point is illustrated by Larsen’s reinstatement of the inside/outside distinction (and its deferral of the possibility of ethics in foreign policy) through reifying the borders of national discursive spaces. Thirdly, it was demonstrated that unconventional FPA’s desire to categorise socially constructed reality in order to give a ‘better’ account of foreign policy means it slips back into asking ‘why’ questions instead of asking ‘how’. This limits its ability to question power relations and ethical assumptions contained within foreign policy situations.

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<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*



## *Conclusion*

This chapter has brought FPA and the poststructuralist IR literature of Ashley, Campbell, Dillon, Doty, Walker and Zehfuss together, in order to make two arguments about the marginalisation of the ethical in FPA. Firstly, it simply proposes that both ‘conventional’ and ‘unconventional’ (mainly constructivist) FPA generally fails to talk about ethics and foreign policy. In itself, this is a fairly banal observation, even if counter-intuitive, given Rosenau’s claim that FPA concerns itself with politics at every level.<sup>255</sup> Secondly, the chapter argues that this ignorance of the ethical is made possible by a series of constitutive assumptions which work to marginalise, defer and make irrelevant questions of ethics and foreign policy.

The first argument, or proposal, was easily demonstrated by introducing and outlining the development of what was termed ‘conventional’ FPA in section one, and ‘unconventional’ FPA in section two. Conventional FPA, emerging from the work of Rosenau, Snyder et al., and the Sprouts sought to separate itself off from IR and explain foreign policy in more or less general and scientific terms. Regarding unconventional FPA, the chapter focused on the growth in constructivist studies of foreign policy, specifically those using discourse analyses. This is a relatively recent phenomenon and thus does not have the extensive literature of the conventional FPA. Neither of these versions of FPA systematically analyse ethics and foreign policy, indeed in conventional FPA it is only mentioned as something which must be purged.

The second argument proceeded through three critiques of each (both conventional and unconventional) FPA to ascertain the methods by which ethics was marginalised. Section one thus demonstrated the way, firstly, the unquestioned assumptions about subjects, objects and the power relations that fix them in relationships allows an ignorance of ethics. The goal of conventional FPA is to find out ‘why’ a foreign policy happens but, as Doty notes, if ‘how’ questions are asked (such as, ‘how did a certain

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<sup>255</sup> Rosenau, “Introduction: New Directions and Recurrent Questions...”, p. 1.



policy become thought of as possible/unthinkable?’),<sup>256</sup> the sub-structure of ethico-political power relations is unearthed and becomes central to foreign policy. Secondly, despite trying to overcome the national/international, inside/outside distinction, conventional FPA ends up reinstating it as a separation of *different* areas, followed by a *deferral* of the possibility of ethics and foreign policy. Finally, section one argued that the use of ‘scientific’ methods allowed FPA to firstly justify purging itself of ethical judgement and, secondly, worked to marginalise it permanently by making FPA a ‘technology’ rather than a ‘politics’.

Section two critiqued the manner in which unconventional FPA, though opening itself up to Doty’s ‘how’ questions, ends up entrenching the marginalisation of the ethical by seeking to retain its acceptability as the ‘middle ground’ of IR and FPA. It was argued that, firstly, this was made possible by retaining the limiting assumption of a non-discursive material reality. This limited the questioning of ‘how’ the world is constructed the way it is. A ‘reality’ prevents our questioning of power relations and ethics by imposing a natural limit to constructions. Secondly, this allows for the reinstatement of the inside/outside distinction, even if at the level of discourse, which legitimises the exclusion of questioning ethics and foreign policy. Thirdly, the attempt to give a ‘better’ account of foreign policy works to establish the primacy of ‘why’ questions more thoroughly. It thereby de-legitimized the poststructuralist discrimination between narratives based on an examination of the ethics it enacts.

These are the reasons behind the continued inability of FPA to address questions of ethics and foreign policy in a serious, systematic way. This thesis proceeds by setting out the ‘non-method’ of deconstruction as a way of examining discourses of ethics and foreign policy. Unlike constructivist discourse analysis, it seeks to question all the ethically dubious power relations which go unquestioned in foreign policy situations. In this way a deconstructive reading, as outlined in Chapter II, gives itself the opportunity to unearth the implications of discursively fixed relations between subjects and objects for the possibility of ethics and foreign policy.

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<sup>256</sup> Doty, “Foreign Policy as Social Construction”, pp. 297-298.



## *Chapter II*

### *Deconstruction: Reading, Foreign Policy, Text*

#### *Introduction*

The previous chapter situated this study in two ‘bodies’ of literature (neither of which is coherent or unitary): FPA and poststructuralist IR theory. As well as reviewing the FPA literature, the argument was made that both its conventional and unconventional forms remain closed to questions of the possibility and impossibility of ethics and foreign policy. This chapter sets out how a poststructuralist exploration, employing a specifically deconstructive approach, can be used to excavate the limits of ethics and/as foreign policy as a deeply problematic area.

Deconstruction is always deconstruction of text. Thus, to deconstruct foreign policy means we must learn to read foreign policy *as text*. Explaining what foreign policy as text means is the focus of the first section and requires the introduction of Derridean thought. The section argues that the search for ‘foreign policy’ as such is just one example of a wider problem with the way we have constructed the world for centuries, what Derrida calls the logocentric privileging of presence over absence. Instead, we should acknowledge that all ‘foreign policy’ is interpreted, understood and relayed through discourse and language. There is no ‘foreign policy’ *as such*, a ‘thing itself’ of foreign policy, only its representation in discourses. The ‘thing’ of foreign policy, what it ‘*is*’, is constantly deferred and marked by absence, much like Derrida’s concept of *writing*. Thus, if foreign policy can be said to be absent, *written*, we can say it is textually constituted; foreign policy, to the extent that it *is*, ‘*is*’ text.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> For a wider and more diverse treatment of the world of international relations as text, see James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro (eds.), *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics* (New York: Lexington Books, 1989).



The second section explicates more precisely how the ‘deconstruction’ of a text works. We must always bear in mind that deconstruction is not simply analysis, critique, or method, nor can it be made into these.<sup>258</sup> At other times, Derrida is less restrictive, suggesting that while there is no ‘method’ of deconstruction as a technical procedure, there are “some general rules” that can be “transposed by analogy... but these rules are taken up in a text which is each time a unique element and which does not let itself be turned totally into a method”.<sup>259</sup> Deconstruction is perhaps best characterised as giving rise to a style, or way of reading texts. The reading accepts what is said without necessarily questioning the conscious intention behind it but shows how the foundations of what is said, the discourse’s own logic, undermines its own claims. In other words, to deconstruct is to read the way a text undercuts itself, removing its own basis.<sup>260</sup>

Deconstruction does not just happen anywhere. There are points of weakness within any text which are more susceptible to deconstructive reading, or rather, there are fault lines where a text is already deconstructing. These points are ‘undecidables’ which resist and disrupt the logic of the text. The third section suggests that the concepts of subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality (the titles and focus of the next three chapters) are precisely such ‘undecidable’ fault lines in the foreign policy texts of Britain and the EU during the period under study. Instead of outlining these concepts here (as they will be covered in the chapters themselves), there is an examination of the way in which these concepts have been alternatively theorised in poststructuralist IR. This reveals the *intertextuality* of the thesis: how it is reacting to, clashing with and overlapping the discourses of others who have written on these three concepts. It also helps to explain the alternative focus of the forthcoming chapters and the different questions that are asked.

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<sup>258</sup> Jacques Derrida, “Letter to a Japanese Friend”, in David Wood and Robert Bernasconi (eds.), *Derrida and Différance* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1988), p. 3.

<sup>259</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Points... Interviews, 1974-1994*, translated by Peggy Kamuf (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 200.

<sup>260</sup> This is similar to one of Jonathan Culler’s “formulations” of deconstruction: “to deconstruct a discourse is to show how it undermines the philosophy it asserts, or the hierarchical oppositions on which it relies, by identifying in the text the rhetorical operations that produce the supposed ground of the argument, the key concept or premise”, Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism* (London: Routledge, 1983), p. 86.



## *Foreign Policy as Text*

Chapter I demonstrated that an initial concern for FPA was how to conceive of ‘foreign policy’ itself. What precisely *is* foreign policy? Is it a series of decisions,<sup>261</sup> actions,<sup>262</sup> spoken utterances,<sup>263</sup> events,<sup>264</sup> an activity,<sup>265</sup> or a bureaucratic product?<sup>266</sup> There is no end to the list of exactly what foreign policy could variously be conceived *as*. All of them, however, exhibit the same desire to present foreign policy *itself*, to make its being *present*. The analysis of foreign policy then has always been a particular instance of what Derrida calls ‘logocentrism’: the tendency in all Western philosophy to understand being as presence.<sup>267</sup> This section explains the centrality of logocentric oppositions, especially that of speech and writing, which is crucial to the understanding of foreign policy as text.

### *Logocentrism, Speech and Writing*

Logocentrism literally means the privileging of the *logos* – the Greek for speech, logic, reason, literally the Word of God.<sup>268</sup> A particularly famous usage of *logos* comes at the beginning of John’s Gospel:

In the beginning was the Word [*logos*], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not understood [or *overcome*] it.<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> See Snyder et al., *Foreign Policy Decision Making*.

<sup>262</sup> See Carlsnaes, *Ideology and Foreign Policy*.

<sup>263</sup> See Onuf, “Speaking Policy”.

<sup>264</sup> See Hudson, “Foreign Policy Analysis”.

<sup>265</sup> See White, “Analysing Foreign Policy: Problems and Approaches”.

<sup>266</sup> See the “Governmental Politics” model in Allison and Zelikow, *The Essence of Decision*.

<sup>267</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), p. 12.

<sup>268</sup> Barbara Johnson, “Translator’s Introduction”, in Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, translated by Barbara Johnson (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1981), p. ix.

<sup>269</sup> John 1: 1-5, *The Bible* (New International Version).



Here we have Christianity as a particular epoch, or aspect, of logocentrism. *Logos* is the capitalised ‘Word of God’, the pure self-presence of speech and thought such that it is *indistinguishable from* God (with God *and was* God). *Logos* was there at the beginning, it governs the hierarchy as it is temporally prior to all else. Other hierarchical oppositions flow from *logos*, from *pure self-presence*. Not only is *logos* a ‘him’ (placing male ‘naturally’ above female), through him everything was made – being as presence. He is connected to light and life, as opposed to darkness and death, and neither of these terms, being hierarchically subordinate, can overcome the first terms. However, though the ‘Word of God’ is the centre of this particular metaphysical structure known as ‘Christianity,’ it is part of a “linked chain” of substituted centres in Western philosophy (such as man, subject, consciousness etc.), the “matrix” of which “is the determination of Being as *presence*”.<sup>270</sup>

Logocentrism does not just lead to substituted centres, but also to a system of binary oppositions on the basis of presence/absence. In the above example, we have light/dark as well as male/female. There is an endless chain of these which substitute for each other in the structuring of Western thought: sensible/intelligible, reason/passion, identity/difference, nature/culture, moral/immoral, good/evil, and so on *ad infinitum*. But the opposition of terms, Derrida makes clear, is neither a peaceful coexistence,<sup>271</sup> nor equal confrontation,<sup>272</sup> but rather a violent hierarchy where the second term is subordinated to the first. Thus, the first term is primary, the second merely derivative. As Culler observes, the second is a complication, negation or disruption of the first term.<sup>273</sup> But this is not by accident. Rather it is the natural consequence of logocentrism – where all philosophy becomes a privileging of being as presence.<sup>274</sup>

The key opposition to the explanation of text is the relationship between speech and writing. Writing, from Plato to Rousseau and beyond, is seen as detrimental to

<sup>270</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, translated by Alan Bass (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 353.

<sup>271</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, translated by Alan Bass (Chicago: The University Of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 41.

<sup>272</sup> Jacques Derrida, “Signature Event Context”, in *Limited Inc*, translated by Samuel Weber (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1988), p. 21.

<sup>273</sup> Culler, *On Deconstruction*, p. 93.

<sup>274</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 12.



knowledge, memory and wisdom,<sup>275</sup> as a “dangerous supplement”<sup>276</sup> to speech and thought. All the reasons for this favouring of speech over writing are connected to the longing for presence. In a deconstructive reading of Condillac, Derrida reveals several ways in which writing has been connected to absence. Firstly, writing functions in the absence of either the one who communicates or the one to receive the communication.<sup>277</sup> The addressor and the addressee do not have to be present at the same time. A second absence, produced by the fact that the two are not co-present, is that if the *meaning* of the communication is misunderstood it cannot be corrected.<sup>278</sup> There is thus an absence of the communicator’s intention and meaning in writing which is not possible under the co-presence of speech, where any misunderstanding can be corrected instantaneously.

Finally, these first two absences represent a more originary absence which is characteristic of writing. Whereas speech is immediately present to thought, thus present to the intention and meaning of thought, writing is a non-natural *representation* of this thought. It is one step removed from presence and is treated as an “artificial and artful ruse to make speech present when it is actually absent”.<sup>279</sup> Writing is the sign, not *the thing itself*. Rather than presenting them, writing merely *re-presents* thought, speech, meaning, intention in their *absence*.

A rigorous determination of the terms of the logocentric opposition, here between speech and writing (as presence and absence), is what Derrida calls a “respectful doubling commentary”.<sup>280</sup> This process, which must “have its place” in every “critical reading”, draws out the logic of the text, makes it clear what its basis is. Such a doubling is essential because it means we remain within the logic of the text; it provides an “indispensable guardrail” such that we cannot allow ourselves to freely interpret any way

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<sup>275</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, translated by Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 101-103.

<sup>276</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 142.

<sup>277</sup> Derrida, “Signature Event Context”, p. 5.

<sup>278</sup> Jacques Derrida, “Dialogue with Jacques Derrida”, in Richard Kearney, *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers: The Phenomenological Heritage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 116.

<sup>279</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 144.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.



we please.<sup>281</sup> This is also important as a rebuttal of critics who claim that, by his notion of ‘text’, Derrida licenses complete freedom of interpretation, such that each interpretation is as valid as any other.<sup>282</sup> However, while indispensable, this doubling commentary does nothing to *open* the reading, and this is Derrida’s goal. This opening is performed by reversing the hierarchy of speech/writing through two functions of writing: its representative nature and its iterability.

### *Representation, Iterability, Différance*

Firstly, as we have seen, writing is always presented as *representative* of speech, while speech is immediately present to the thought itself. Thus, writing as mere representation of thought denotes an absence; when we cannot present the thing itself we “go through the detour of the sign”.<sup>283</sup> In Saussure’s linguistic theory, the sign is separated into the signifier (the word) and the signified (the thing itself). The relationship between the two is arbitrary, but signifiers must signify a signified. Thus, the signifier is marked by absence through being the representation of the signified. Derrida disrupts this simple logic by revealing that the signifier always signifies *another* signifier, which itself signifies *another signifier*, and so on – all of which demonstrates the very absence of the thing itself, the absence of presence. “The signifier is originally and essentially... trace, that is *always already in the position of the signifier*.”<sup>284</sup> This “trace” is the chain of signifiers and denotes the “disappearance of origin” as the absence of the signified.<sup>285</sup>

This representative structure can be illustrated using the example of foreign policy. When a foreign policy analyst writes the words ‘foreign policy’, it is to signify a certain *thing* – ‘foreign policy’ *itself*. But when the analyst comes to explain what foreign policy is, *in itself*, they can only refer to *other signifiers*, such as decisions, actions, activity,

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<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>282</sup> For such a (mis)reading see Mary Warnock, *An Intelligent Person’s Guide to Ethics* (London: Duckbacks, 2001).

<sup>283</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, translated by Alan Bass (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982), p. 9.

<sup>284</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 73 – emphasis in original.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.



bureaucratic product, spoken utterances and events.<sup>286</sup> These aim to make the *in itself* of foreign policy present, but all they do is show the impossibility of presenting this presence in language. Rather than the presence of ‘foreign policy’ *itself*, the signified, standing at the origin of this chain of signifiers (decisions, actions and so on), what we see rather is the *absence* of foreign policy, the impossibility of presenting ‘foreign policy’ *as such*.

Crucially, as was perhaps clear in the example, this representative structure is true of writing *and* speech. Speech is itself always a sign, a representation of the pure self-presence of thought as this cannot be communicated *as such*, but only through its representation.<sup>287</sup> Representation then, in both speech and writing, “mingles with what it represents”,<sup>288</sup> such that what is represented itself represents something else, there is nowhere the *thing itself*, or what Derrida calls the “transcendental signified”<sup>289</sup> (foreign policy *itself*, in the example given) – that which comes from outside language and discourse as the ultimate *represented*, the presence beyond representation. In such a “play of representation, the point of origin becomes ungraspable” and we are left with reflecting pools and images, “an infinite reference from one to the other, but no longer a source, a spring”.<sup>290</sup> In *all* language and communication, signs are signs of signs, nowhere is there the presence of this *thing* available outside of signs.

Secondly, linking to the way that writing denotes absence through functioning despite the absence of either addressor or addressee, we can say that writing is *iterable*. This means that, to retain meaning, even in the absence or death of the communicator or receiver, the writing must be repeatable in other contexts.<sup>291</sup> There is only meaning in the communication if the writing is generalisable, capable of making sense to everyone, even without knowing the author’s intentions. Writing denotes absence because we can remove its repeatable meaning from the specific context, its specific chain of references

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<sup>286</sup> See p. 65 for this list of how ‘foreign policy’ has variously been conceived.

<sup>287</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena: And Other Essays On Husserl’s Theory of Signs*, translated by David B. Allison (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p. 40.

<sup>288</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 36.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>291</sup> Derrida, “Signature Event Context”, p. 9.



and “recognize other possibilities in it by inscribing it or *grafting* it onto other chains”.<sup>292</sup> Thus, ‘iterable’ does not mean just repeatable, but also *transformative*. The intentional meaning is structurally capable of being lost, or rather *changed*, so that it means something *other* than the author’s conscious intention. As well as writing denoting absence because of its representative character, it also signifies absence through its iterability; the meaning of its communication can be repeated and transformed in different contexts, in the absence of the author and reader.

However, this structure of iterability is equally true of the spoken word as it is of the written. As Derrida observes, every sign “can be *cited*, put between quotation marks”, and as such “it can break with every given context, engendering an infinity of new contexts in a manner which is absolutely illimitable”.<sup>293</sup> The iterability of the spoken word is demonstrated by the very possibility of being ‘quoted out of context’. Such a quotation can completely change the apparent intentional meaning of what was allegedly said. Therefore, *any* communication, whether spoken or written, *must* be capable of iteration. If it were not iterable, a communication would be totally singular and unrepeatable; as such it could communicate nothing, it would have no meaning. Rather, every mark of language must be inscribed in a chain of references for it to make any sense.

Whether in the order of spoken or written discourse, no element can function as a sign without referring to another element which itself is not simply present. This interweaving results in each ‘element’ – phoneme or grapheme – being constituted on the basis of the trace within it of the other elements of the chain or system. This interweaving, this textile, is the *text* produced only in the transformation of another text. Nothing, neither among the elements nor within the system, is anywhere ever simply present or absent. There are only, everywhere, differences and traces of traces.<sup>294</sup>

These two functions of writing, its representative nature and iterative structure, which are not wholly separable, have been shown to be equally the case in speech. The

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<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>294</sup> Derrida, *Positions*, p. 26.



significance of this is that, rather than writing being derivative of speech, merely its dangerous representation, speech, and language in general, is “founded on the general possibility of writing”.<sup>295</sup> If speech and language also exhibit the impossibility of presence, and the defining feature (or what Derrida calls elsewhere the “*specific difference*”)<sup>296</sup> of writing is absence, all language becomes an “arche-writing”.<sup>297</sup> The chain of signifiers leaves a trace, interweaving with other contexts to form a *text* of references with no transcendental signified ever making itself present. Thus, Derrida has inverted the hierarchy, placing writing above speech, making the latter a derivative of the former and has displaced the general opposition by making it clear with ‘trace’ and ‘text’ that nothing “is anywhere *ever simply present or absent*”.<sup>298</sup>

This arche-writing, or what Derrida more often calls “the movement of difference”,<sup>299</sup> is of course, very difficult to think. *Différance* questions and radically displaces the fundamental basis of logocentrism and Western thought, the originary opposition between presence and absence. The word *différance* is a neologism which Derrida formed from the two meanings of the French verb *différer*: to defer, or “the action of putting off until later...of taking account of time...a detour, a delay”, in one word “temporization”; and, the more common usage, to differ, or “to be not identical, to be other... an interval, a distance”, in one word “*spacing*”.<sup>300</sup> ‘Différance’ loses the first meaning, and thus Derrida compensates this with the ‘*a*’. However, crucially the ‘*a*’ is heard only in silence; in French, *différance* sounds the same as difference, thus, as a word it can only be read or written. In its very inscription, therefore, *différance* disturbs the opposition between writing (where it appears as present) and speech (where it disappears as absent).

At one and the same time then, *différance* is a movement of differing (a *spatial* relation of difference) and deferring (a *temporal* relation of delay). In dialogue with Richard

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<sup>295</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 52.

<sup>296</sup> Derrida, “Signature Event Context”, p. 6.

<sup>297</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 56.

<sup>298</sup> Derrida, *Positions*, p. 26.

<sup>299</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 60.

<sup>300</sup> Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, p. 8.



Kearney, Derrida observes “it is neither *this* nor *that*; but rather this *and* that”.<sup>301</sup> Thus, it produces and problematizes all binary oppositions, starting with the foundational presence and absence on which all the others are figured. The production of difference and delay is important to re-state in terms of *différance*. To be absolutely purely self-present a concept would refer only to itself, but this is impossible as “no element can function as a sign without referring to another element which itself is not simply present”.<sup>302</sup> Thus, we must “go through the detour of the sign”, hence the sign is “deferred presence”.<sup>303</sup> Conceptualisation of the concept is made possible by *différance*: it must differ from other concepts in the chain which form its trace; it must defer, postpone, delay the presentation of the thing itself. It is the origin of differences while at the same time making ‘origin’ impossible, as a simple origin or source, implies a presence;<sup>304</sup> it can only ever be a *non-originary* origin.

We have come across this movement of *différance* in the previous chapter, though it was not flagged up as such. The way the ethical is excluded from conventional (and some unconventional) FPA was on the basis of the binary opposition: inside/outside. Richard Ashley’s argument that this exclusion was performed by a realist ‘double-move’ can be expressed as *différance* making the inside/outside distinction possible. Firstly, he observes that a spatial relation of difference is invoked between inside (figured as ordered, community based with the possibility of justice) and outside (figured as anarchic, war based, with no justice). Secondly, the first move justifies a temporal movement of deferring the ethical project of the inside until order is achieved outside: until the inside can be made present outside.<sup>305</sup> In explicitly Derridean terms we can now see that the marginalisation of ethics from FPA is not based on a non-discursive material ‘reality,’ but rather on the reification of a textual movement of *différance*.

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<sup>301</sup> Derrida, “Dialogue with Jacques Derrida”, p. 110.

<sup>302</sup> Derrida, *Positions*, p. 26.

<sup>303</sup> Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, p. 9.

<sup>304</sup> Jacques Derrida, “The Original Discussion of Différance”, in Wood and Bernasconi (eds.), *Derrida and Différance*, p. 85.

<sup>305</sup> Ashley, “The Geopolitics of Geopolitical Space”.



### *Foreign Policy as Text*

Now we are in a far better position to explain what it means to read (and thus deconstruct) foreign policy as text. This understanding undercuts all the claims to foreign policy as decision, events, actions, bureaucratic product, spoken utterance and so on. All these attempts to get to what 'foreign policy' really *is* are disallowed by the fact that we can never get to this presence, this *is*, of foreign policy. Rather, any 'foreign policy' will always be interpreted, relayed and described through discourse (which Derrida describes as the "*representation of a text within the experience of the person who writes or reads it*"),<sup>306</sup> thus it can only ever be the differing and deferral of a presence. Foreign policy can *only* be understood as the interweaving of traces and chains of signifiers with no signified – a *text*.<sup>307</sup>

This does not mean that deconstruction simply suspends reference to 'reality'. Rather, reality "functions inside the text to indicate that which exceeds the text *but can be given no fixed form outside some sort of textualisation*".<sup>308</sup> 'Reality' can only ever be textually constituted. This is what Derrida means when he says, "[t]here is nothing outside of the text [there is no outside-text; *il n'y a pas de hors-texte*]."<sup>309</sup> What is rarely quoted beyond this sentence is revealing. He observes that what is 'behind' the text, the "real life of these existences 'of flesh and bone'", is simply "substitutive significations which could come forth in a chain of differential references, the 'real' supervening, and being added only while taking on meaning from a trace".<sup>310</sup> In *Limited Inc*, Derrida clarifies further, observing that there being nothing outside the text means nothing other than "there is nothing outside context", and context means "the entire 'real-history-of-the-world'".<sup>311</sup>

By treating foreign policy as text, therefore, we do not suspend reference to 'reality,' world, history, and so on, as to speak of these things is only ever done "in a movement of

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<sup>306</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 101.

<sup>307</sup> Derrida, *Positions*, p. 26.

<sup>308</sup> William Connolly, *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 54.

<sup>309</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 158.

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>311</sup> Derrida, *Limited Inc*, p. 136.



interpretation which contextualizes them according to a network of differences”.<sup>312</sup> Rather than suspending reference, it actually *increases* references, it opens up every context, shows that context/text can never be totalised, or totally comprehended. Every text refers to other texts, to other experiences, cultural and historical interpretations, within a “general text” that is “everywhere”.<sup>313</sup> Thus what is called deconstruction can be seen as “the effort to take this limitless context into account, to pay the sharpest and broadest attention to context, and thus to an incessant movement of recontextualisation”.<sup>314</sup>

This expansion of reference means that ‘foreign policy’ is no longer strictly circumscribed to governmental, or inter-governmental, activity at all. The foreign policy text, or context, cannot be exhaustively ring-fenced, and thus we can never say that a certain aspect of life, history or culture is irrelevant to a foreign policy decision. This separates a deconstructive approach from that of Larsen’s combination of Foucault and Habermas in his constructivist take on the discursive formation of foreign policy. As observed in Chapter I, Larsen problematically separates ‘national’ discourses, and ‘national’ from ‘international’ discourses, using Foucault.<sup>315</sup> However, he also separates *political* discourse from *popular*, using a Habermasian understanding.<sup>316</sup> Such a distinction falls down when we see all such discourses as individual representations of the general societal text. Every text, all experience, thus refers to and is constituted by other texts. Texts are always already therefore *intertexts*: spaces where representations overlap, blend and clash.<sup>317</sup>

An important implication of this is that we are no longer able to say that foreign policy is *made* by ‘foreign policy makers’ in any simple sense. Rather, as everyone works to constitute and reconstitute the societal context, *everyone makes* foreign policy and there can be no ‘real’ boundary between the popular and political discourse. This, of course,

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<sup>312</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.

<sup>313</sup> Derrida, *Positions*, p. 60.

<sup>314</sup> Derrida, *Limited Inc*, p. 136.

<sup>315</sup> Larsen, *Foreign Policy and Discourse Analysis*, pp. 224-28.

<sup>316</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>317</sup> Der Derian, *Antidiplomacy*, p. 27.



means that there can be no ultimate justification for limiting the research for this thesis to the speeches and speech makers on which the next three chapters concentrate. As stated in the Introduction to this thesis, it cannot be claimed that these speeches and public statements (of the Prime Minister and Foreign Ministers in British foreign policy, and the HR for the CFSP, the Commissioner for External Relations and the President of the Commission in EU foreign policy) exhaust, or fully constitute, their foreign policy texts. The context is inexhaustible as has been made clear. But it is suggested that the posts mentioned are uniquely suited to communicating 'Britain' and the 'EU' to the world. They both speak and *are spoken by* the texts of British and EU foreign policy in a way that, for example, a Minister for Finance, a journalist or an 'ordinary' citizen are not.

When we see foreign policy as textually constituted, it does mean we all to some extent 'make' foreign policy, but this is not to say that the terms 'foreign policy' and 'foreign policy maker' cease to function. As Derrida makes clear, just because a sign refers to no transcendental signified, no 'reality' outside of text/context, does not stop its operation and it can remain indispensable, but *within limits*.<sup>318</sup> As will become clear through the discussion of subjectivity in Chapters III and VI, the myth of the responsible subject will continue to function and produces effects even while its mythical status is rigorously explicated.

Perhaps most importantly for this thesis, however, the absence of anything called 'foreign policy' outside of text allows me to take at face value the logic asserted by British and EU foreign policy when they make a claim to ethics. Much extant literature rules out this approach by arguing, for example, that such claims really serve as rhetorical devices to hide a conventional power politics,<sup>319</sup> or as a cynical attempt to evade domestic political accountability by appealing to a universal morality.<sup>320</sup> These criticisms of ethics and foreign policy appeal then to a *real* driving force behind foreign

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<sup>318</sup> Derrida, *Positions*, pp. 19-29.

<sup>319</sup> Put very forcefully by Mark Curtis, *Web of Deceit: Britain's Real Role in the World* (London: Vintage, London, 2003).

<sup>320</sup> David Chandler, "Rhetoric without Responsibility: the attraction of 'ethical' foreign policy" *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* Vol. 5, No.3 (2003), pp. 295-316.



policy, which is never ethics. Those who support the opposite view tend to argue that moral norms *really do* influence foreign policy decision making.<sup>321</sup>

In contrast, this thesis does not have to take a position on whether ethics *really did* influence British foreign policy between 1997-2006, or EU foreign policy between 1999-2004. Simply put, it does not matter, and for at least two reasons. Firstly, it does not matter because we cannot know such a ‘reality’ – all we can know is its representation in discourse. Thus we are perfectly justified in examining how this textualised reality is represented. Secondly, it does not matter because the aim of this thesis is not to claim whether foreign policy was, or is, based on an ethical dimension. Rather, the goal is to show how these claims to the ethical deconstruct. How the logical basis of their discourse on ethics undermines its own basis, and where we can go from there.

This section has outlined what it means to read foreign policy as text. It began by showing that the FPA search for what foreign policy ‘is’ could be described as a particular instance of ‘logocentrism’, or the privileging of being as presence. Such logocentrism gives rise to a series of hierarchical binary opposites based on that of presence/absence. Derrida’s deconstruction of logocentrism focuses initially upon the opposition speech (always designating presence) and writing (as absence). Using writing’s representative and iterative structure as the basis for this absence, Derrida reveals that *all* language is in fact founded on absence. Thus, we can say that all communication, and therefore all cultural and historical reality (which can only be relayed and interpreted *through* language) can be conceived as a textually constituted web of signifiers and traces based on a non-originary *différance*. ‘Foreign policy’ to the extent that it *is*, can only ‘be’ a writing, a text.

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<sup>321</sup> McElroy, *Morality and American Foreign Policy*, see especially p. 30.



## *Deconstructing Text*

The first section demonstrated the validity of treating foreign policy as text. This second section concentrates on how such a text deconstructs; how deconstruction operates. Of course, Derrida's thinking of text is itself a deconstruction of logocentric thought: the oppositions of presence and absence, speech and writing, the 'rhetoric' and 'reality' of foreign policy. The purpose of this section, however, is to explain how deconstruction takes place such that it can be illustrated in the next four chapters. The words in this last sentence have been selected very carefully and carry caveats with them.

Firstly, it states that an explanation will show how deconstruction 'takes place', not how it can be *used* by an agent/subject. This is because, strictly speaking, *we*, or *I*, cannot deconstruct a text; the text deconstructs. "Deconstruction takes place" and does not depend on "the deliberation, consciousness, or organization of a subject".<sup>322</sup> It does not require our understanding it, formulating it and putting it to work. Quite simply, "[i]t is what happens, what is happening today in what they call society, politics, diplomacy, economics, historical reality... Deconstruction is the case."<sup>323</sup>

Secondly, it is suggested that deconstruction could be 'illustrated' in the next four chapters. This is because deconstruction is not analysis, critique nor method;<sup>324</sup> nor is it a theory, philosophy, school, act or practice.<sup>325</sup> To treat it as any of the above would have the danger of formalising deconstruction, and deconstruction *cannot* be formalised.<sup>326</sup> Any formalisation, whether as method, theory, practice and so on, would reduce deconstruction to a program, a technical operation that could be simply 'applied' to a given case or text. Derrida emphasizes that there is never a single deconstruction that can be defined thus, outside of all context. "Deconstruction does not exist somewhere, pure,

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<sup>322</sup> Derrida, "Letter to a Japanese Friend", p. 4.

<sup>323</sup> Jacques Derrida, "Some Statements and Truisms About Neologisms, Newisms, Postisms, Parasitisms, and Other Small Seismisms", translated by Anne Tomiche, in David Carroll (ed.), *The States of 'Theory': History, Art, and Critical Discourse* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 85.

<sup>324</sup> Derrida, "Letter to a Japanese Friend", p. 3.

<sup>325</sup> Derrida, "Some Statements and Truisms...", p. 85.

<sup>326</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Negotiations: Interventions and Interviews 1971-2001*, translated by Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 193.



proper, self-identical, outside of its inscriptions in conflictual and differentiated contexts; it ‘is’ only what it does and what is done with it, there where it takes place”.<sup>327</sup> Thus, the two caveats stress that *we* cannot *apply* ‘deconstruction’ pure and simple; we can *read* its taking place, wherever it may occur in a text.

### *Overturning, Displacing, Undecidability*

Having stressed the lack of set procedures for deconstruction, given that which is deconstructed is always the binary dichotomies of logocentric thought, it is unsurprising that there emerge certain regularities, or tendencies, in deconstructive reading. Thus, while deconstruction should not, and cannot, be made into a technical procedure there “are also some general rules” that can be “transposed by analogy”.<sup>328</sup> However, “these rules are taken up in a text which is each time a unique element and which does not let itself be turned totally into a method”.<sup>329</sup> This is indeed a fine line to tread. Yet, we can see Derrida navigating this line when he notes that, while these general rules may be considered as a “two-phase” approach, these phases cannot be strictly separated other than “for the sake of clarity”.<sup>330</sup>

What are these “general rules” that can be transposed only by analogy? Derrida makes it clear that we must avoid simply neutralising binaries, or remaining within them. Deconstruction, rather, demands a double gesture. It “puts into practice a *reversal* of the classical opposition *and* a general *displacement* of the system”.<sup>331</sup> Thus, on the one hand deconstruction tends to a reversal or overturning of the violent hierarchies imposed by logocentrism, making the first term a derivative of the second – “[t]o deconstruct the opposition, first of all, is to overturn the hierarchy at a given moment.”<sup>332</sup> Thus, we saw above Derrida’s overturning of the speech/writing binary, such that rather than writing

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<sup>327</sup> Derrida, *Limited Inc*, p. 141.

<sup>328</sup> Derrida, *Points...*, p. 200.

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>330</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100.

<sup>331</sup> Derrida, “Signature Event Context”, p. 21.

<sup>332</sup> Derrida, *Positions*, p. 41.



deriving from, and complicating speech, speech came to be *a type of writing*. This phase of deconstruction is absolutely essential and too often brushed over. Ignoring it, however, reduces the influence a deconstruction can have in the field it deconstructs.<sup>333</sup>

Nonetheless, simply to stop at this overturning would be to remain within logocentrism; although we have inverted it, the hierarchical binary remains. Thus, as well as overturning, deconstruction displaces the system by moving towards the “irruptive emergence of a new ‘concept’, a concept that can no longer be, never could be, included in the previous regime”.<sup>334</sup> Such a movement *beyond* metaphysics is, however, impossible. Thus, the displacement envisaged by deconstruction is seen as the “marking of the interval”, between a remaining *within* and a complete *transgression* of logocentric metaphysics. To “better mark” this interval, Derrida allows certain words, or marks, within the history of philosophy and the literary text that, by analogy, he calls “undecidables”.<sup>335</sup>

Such undecidables cannot be reduced to opposition but reside *within it*, “resisting and disorganising it, *without ever* constituting a third term”, and thus without even becoming dialectical.<sup>336</sup> Undecidables are terms which neither exist simply inside nor outside of metaphysical discourse and its constitutive binaries, but rather work on their margins and limits, disrupting and displacing them. As such, their status is inherently *undecidable*. One undecidable, the *supplement*, is illustrated below, but the basic structure of all undecidables is that they are “[n]either/nor, that is, *simultaneously*, either/or.”<sup>337</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>335</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 42-3.

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>337</sup> *Ibid.*



### *Supplementary Undecidability*

As neither inside nor outside, but on the margins and at the limits of thought, undecidables indicate the play of *différance*, examined above. *Différance*, as we have seen, is the “non-full, non-simple, structured and differentiating origin of differences. Thus the name ‘origin’ no longer suits it.”<sup>338</sup> Like the traces of references it produces, *différance* is neither fully present nor fully absent, but disrupts the dichotomy *while never constituting a third term outside of the opposition*. A crucial undecidable, which is used especially in Chapters III and IV, is the *supplement*, which emerges as a form of *différance* in Derrida’s deconstruction of the speech/writing opposition. Derrida’s understanding of the supplement arises from the text he deconstructs – Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s account of the origin of language.

Rousseau uses the term ‘supplement’ to describe writing’s relation to speech. For Rousseau, writing is a technical ploy to divert the immediate presence of thought to speech into representation, to represent something as present when it is actually absent. In one sense, it therefore saves the presence of speech by recording and archiving it, thus writing becomes necessary when “speech fails to protect presence”.<sup>339</sup> But writing is then a “dangerous supplement”<sup>340</sup> as it can make one forget that it is only an imitative substitute for presence<sup>341</sup> – the addition of absence to a presence; the making absent of presence.

Therefore, Derrida points out that there are at least two meanings that can be taken from the word ‘supplement.’ Firstly, it is an insignificant and inessential extra, a “surplus” to what was already complete in and of itself – the presence of speech to thought. But, secondly, the very possibility of this surplus supplement suggests that that which is supplemented is incomplete. Why else would a supplement be added? As Culler describes it, when a supplement is added to a dictionary it is an extra section which is

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<sup>338</sup> Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, p. 11.

<sup>339</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 144.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 144.



added on, “but the possibility of adding a supplement indicates that the dictionary itself is incomplete”.<sup>342</sup> As well as an addition then, “the supplement supplements. It adds only to replace. It intervenes or insinuates itself in-the-place-of.”<sup>343</sup> Thus, the supplement both adds to what is already full *and* substitutes one signification for another; both meanings are present within Rousseau’s text.

The supplement is for Rousseau a “scandal” and a “catastrophe” to logic.<sup>344</sup> If speech were a full-presence, it would not need the supplement of writing, after all, what is added *must be nothing*, as it is exterior to a full-presence.<sup>345</sup> Yet Rousseau sees the possibility of physical “gesture” as a more immediate sign than speech, more immediate to the self-presence of thought. Therefore, speech can itself only ever be a supplement of a more natural language – that of gesture.<sup>346</sup> Speech is also marked by absence, itself the supplement of the intuitive presence of thought,<sup>347</sup> and it cannot be otherwise. Rousseau finds himself in a dual position. Throughout his text he decries the supplement as an unnecessary and dangerous addition *and* praises it as a progress.<sup>348</sup> The supplement is *both* bad and good, the worst and the best, and yet neither one nor the other.

Rather than gesture, speech or articulation being the *origin* of language, we have a “relationship of mutual and incessant supplementarity or substitution” as the *order* of language.<sup>349</sup> And this structure of supplementarity recurs throughout the Rousseauian text. It is equally applicable to the way nature is supplemented by culture and reason, normal sexual behaviour by masturbation, innocence by evil and the origin by history.<sup>350</sup> Yet Rousseau is “not alone in being caught in the graphic of supplementarity. All meaning and therefore all discourse is caught there.”<sup>351</sup> This movement of what Derrida

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<sup>342</sup> Culler, *On Deconstruction*, p. 102.

<sup>343</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 145.

<sup>344</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 148.

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167.

<sup>346</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134-5.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167.

<sup>348</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 229.

<sup>349</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235.

<sup>350</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167.

<sup>351</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 246.



calls “supplementary *différance*”<sup>352</sup> is the origin of all signification, “an infinite chain, ineluctably multiplying the supplementary mediations that produce the sense of the very thing they defer: the mirage of the thing itself, of immediate presence”.<sup>353</sup>

The logic of supplementarity, enacting the movement of *différance*, is thus shown to be inherently *undecidable*: it both inhabits the binary opposition of presence and absence, and disrupts them by being neither strictly one nor the other. It both *adds to* and *detracts from* presence, “neither an outside nor the complement of an inside”.<sup>354</sup> Supplementarity demonstrates that a strict presence or absence is impossible, and yet produces both as their non-origin. Examples of undecidability in Derrida’s work abound, such as the *pharmakon*, the *hymen*, the *hinge*, yet all conform to this logic of “[n]either/nor, that is, *simultaneously*, either *or*.”<sup>355</sup>

Undecidables, in embodying its disruptive logic, are crucial to the possibility of deconstruction. The two phases outlined above include an *overturning* of the binary opposition that orders and fixes meaning in a text (for example, such that speech becomes derivative of writing, instead of vice-versa), and the *displacement* of the opposition (a generalisation of ‘writing’ which shows that *all* language, history and meaning is marked by ‘absence’). But deconstruction does not occur just anywhere in the text. Rather, what Derrida calls the *incision* of deconstruction happens “only according to lines of force and forces of rupture that are localizable in the discourse to be deconstructed”.<sup>356</sup> To illustrate deconstruction taking place in the text, we must look for the points where it can make its incision, points at which the text disrupts itself. These points are nothing other than ‘undecidables’; forces of rupture that disturb the text by inhabiting it, but on the margins and incompletely. Illustrating the work of deconstruction is about finding the undecidability operating to subvert and disorder the text being read.

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<sup>352</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238, but see also, p. 167 and p. 183.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157.

<sup>354</sup> Derrida, *Positions*, p. 43.

<sup>355</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>356</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.



### *Incisions: Subjectivity, Responsibility and Hospitality in IR*

Section two drew out the general rules of deconstruction, which can never be formalised into a method. This means there should always be some suspicion and discomfort over Derrida's use of the word 'rules'. The two 'phases' of deconstruction cannot be simply applied, but must work within the logic of the text that is deconstructed in the inversion and displacement of binary hierarchies. What is signalled by the movement of *différance* and the logic of supplementary substitution is that to read deconstructively is to search for the fault lines and points of rupture within a text: points of undecidability. This is to, as Michael J. Shapiro puts it, "make use of insurrectional textuality";<sup>357</sup> that within the text which disrupts its own logic.

In order to deconstruct discourses of ethics and foreign policy within the foreign policy text, three such points of incision have been selected which are inherently undecidable (products of the play of *différance*): subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality. As stated in the Introduction to this thesis, these concepts are in fact all tied together within the British and EU foreign policy texts through the overarching theme of an ethical foreign policy as a *responsible* relation to otherness. As inseparable concepts of responsibility, they will be examined consecutively in the following three chapters to expose their 'insurrectional textuality', how they both constitute (or make possible) discourses of ethics and foreign policy *and* disrupt them at the same time. Like *différance*, which both gives presence and absence while being neither, conceptions of subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality reveal both the possibility and impossibility of ethics and foreign policy, while signifying simply neither.

The Derridean deconstruction of these terms is employed (such as that of 'responsibility' in *The Gift of Death*), but within the specific context of the foreign policy text. However, before moving on to this deconstructive reading, it is important to take note of how these

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<sup>357</sup> Michael J. Shapiro, "Textualizing Global Politics", in Der Derian and Shapiro (eds.), *International/Intertextual Relations*, p. 13.



terms have been questioned and alternatively theorised in IR, especially from a poststructuralist perspective. This section will give a brief introduction to some important contributions, highlighting how the thesis does not operate in a vacuum but nonetheless works differently, using different foci and raising different questions.

### *Subjectivity*

Subjectivity has “become a key notion in recent attempts to retheorize the political”, especially in poststructuralist and critical thought influenced by feminism, deconstruction and psychoanalysis.<sup>358</sup> The necessity of “decentering” the subject means that the issue has been given centrality in discussions of the depoliticization and repoliticization of international relations.<sup>359</sup> These ‘decenterings’ have taken many forms, many of which accord with the themes outlined in Chapter III. For example, Dillon invokes Julia Kristeva in order to problematise subjects as always “strangers to themselves... because of this active constitutive difference that they bear within themselves as the selves that they are”.<sup>360</sup> This unavoidable difference is why, as Edkins and Pin-Fat maintain, “the subject never achieves the completion and wholeness toward which it strives”. In a Derridean sense, the subject never achieves *presence*, but always “remains haunted by that which has to be excluded for subjectivity to be constituted in the first place”.<sup>361</sup> Constitutive difference and the exclusion of otherness is crucial to the representations of responsibility in Chapters IV and V.

Poststructuralist literature has often focused its critique on the noted tendency in orthodox IR theory to upgrade the Cartesian subject (rational, conscious, sovereign individual)<sup>362</sup> to the level of the state. For example, in Kenneth Waltz’s ‘Third Image’ focus on the international system, sovereign states become capable of reasoning, acting

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<sup>358</sup> Jenny Edkins and Veronique Pin-Fat, “The Subject of the Political”, in Edkins et al. (eds.), *Sovereignty and Subjectivity*, p. 1.

<sup>359</sup> See Edkins, *Poststructuralism and International Relations*, especially Chapter 2, pp. 21-40.

<sup>360</sup> Dillon, “The Sovereign and the Stranger”, p. 118.

<sup>361</sup> Edkins and Pin-Fat, “The Subject of the Political”, p. 1.

<sup>362</sup> Stuart Hall, “The Question of Cultural Identity”, in Stuart Hall, David Held and Tony McGrew (eds.), *Modernity and Its Futures* (Oxford: Polity, 2003), pp 282-283.



and speaking as rational, unified subjects.<sup>363</sup> Ashley argues that, though the “sovereign *subjectivity* of a state” is an ordering principle of international anarchy for orthodox IR, “the sovereignty of reasoning man” retains primacy.<sup>364</sup>

They accord ‘sovereignty’ to the state as an agency of action only on the condition that the transcendental foundations of man’s free, public, and universalizing use of reason are established as the fundamental principle of state conduct, the objective of state policy, and the ground of state legitimation.<sup>365</sup>

This assumption of state sovereignty, and its link to reasoning man, extends its influence beyond ‘realism’ and ‘idealism’ in IR, also reaching more ‘critical’ approaches. Nalini Persram thus argues that social constructivism’s refusal to shake this assumption will forever limit it as a truly critical approach to international relations and confirms its status as a “newly adorned neo-orthodoxy”.<sup>366</sup>

However, rather than discussing subjectivity in general, this thesis focuses specifically on the construction of the subject of ethics and foreign policy in the British and EU text. This emerges as a subject which can take responsibility. The deconstruction of this subject in Chapters III and VI is therefore both similar to, and different from, Vivienne Jabri’s advocacy of a movement away from the subject of responsibility conceived only as a citizen within a sovereign state. Jabri argues that normative IR theory, structured around the cosmopolitan versus communitarian debate, restricts the possibilities for taking responsibility by remaining wedded to a reconciliation of sovereignty and subjectivity within the state. Breaking with this limiting thought of subjectivity means that “we are no longer constrained in our imagination by the imprint of the state but,

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<sup>363</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), see especially pp. 160-179.

<sup>364</sup> Richard Ashley, “The Powers of Anarchy: Theory, Sovereignty, and the Domestication of Global Life (1988)”, in James Der Derian (ed.), *International Theory: Critical Investigations* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), pp. 106-107.

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.

<sup>366</sup> Nalini Persram, “Coda: Sovereignty, Subjectivity, Strategy”, in Edkins et al. (eds.), *Sovereignty and Subjectivity*, p. 170.



rather, make the move towards the construction of self as the starting point for a post-positivist ethical agenda”.<sup>367</sup>

Jabri’s aim is a liberation, or what she calls a Foucauldian ‘restyling’, of subjectivity, leading to a multiplication of possible sites of responsibility and moral agency. Ethics and responsibility in international relations then would no longer just mean the state “enact[ing] an ethical policy towards other states”.<sup>368</sup> This thesis takes a clearly different approach, though it agrees that ethics and responsibility in *foreign policy*, as well as international relations, cannot only be about the ethical policies of one state to another. However, the use of Derridean deconstruction (rather than Jabri’s use of Foucault and Kristeva) means that the analysis of this thesis is based in the text of British and EU foreign policy.

The understanding of ethical subjectivity which emerges in this deconstructive reading is both similar to, and breaks from, the subject as sovereign state. After all, the EU in constructing itself as a subject of international affairs makes no claims to being a sovereign state. In addition, while there is definite cross-over with Jabri’s focus upon freeing up subjectivity, the focus is not only on individuals but primarily collective subjects. In Chapter VI, the negotiation of subjectivity in foreign policy demands a contextual decision as to which particular subject in the chain of supplementary signifiers should be affirmed in any situation.

Like Cynthia Weber, this thesis views subjectivity as performative,<sup>369</sup> or rather a *declarative* performance of subjectivity. It examines this problematic and unstable declaration in specific contexts, bringing the argument closest to the work of Zehfuss and Campbell. Zehfuss uses the thought of Judith Butler to problematise the prior existence, independence and invulnerability of the ‘we’ – the claim to subjectivity – on which the invasion of Iraq was based. This makes it impossible to simply ask whether

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<sup>367</sup> Vivienne Jabri, “Restyling the Subject of Responsibility in International Relations” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* Vol. 27, No. 3 (1998), p. 592.

<sup>368</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 594-5.

<sup>369</sup> Cynthia Weber, “Masquerading and the U.S. ‘Intervasion’ of Haiti”, in Edkins et al. (eds.), *Sovereignty and Subjectivity*, p. 51.



the invasion was ethically right or wrong, as too much is already assumed in this question. Primary amongst these assumptions is the prior existence of an invading ‘we’ which is *separate* from an invaded ‘them.’ “In other words, the question of ethics, of how we should relate to others, is in danger of obscuring the way in which we are always already related to them.”<sup>370</sup> Zehfuss’ point is well made but this thesis argues further that, while ‘we’ are always vulnerable to and inseparable from otherness, this does not mean ‘we’ should stop looking for the *better* way to construct and relate to the other.

It is unsurprising that Campbell’s explicitly deconstructive examination of the performance of subjectivity and identity in Bosnia is closest to that of this thesis. He is able to generalise from ‘Bosnia’ to show that the “deconstruction of the state as subject is not restricted to those states subject to destruction”.<sup>371</sup> Using Derrida’s account of the mystical foundation of authority in ‘Force of Law’, Campbell shows that the founding moment of every state is an interpretive and performative *coup de force*: a claim to subjectivity, an assertion of a ‘we’ without ground.<sup>372</sup> Chapter III’s account of British and EU subjectivity has many similarities to Campbell’s (such as the impossibility of providing a firm ground for claims to a ‘we’), without making use of the *coup de force*. Rather, the ‘concept’ of *différance* and the way it produces *effects* of subjectivity, as well as Derrida’s account of democratic ‘autoimmunity,’ are used. These accounts excavate the way, as Campbell says elsewhere, foreign policy becomes “an arena of practice in which some subjects emerge with the status of actors” and others do not.<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>370</sup> Maja Zehfuss, “Subjectivity and Vulnerability: On the War with Iraq”, in James Brassett and Dan Bulley (eds.), “Ethics in World Politics: Cosmopolitanism and Beyond?” Special Issue, *International Politics* Vol. 44, No. 1 (*forthcoming*, 2007).

<sup>371</sup> David Campbell, “Violence, Justice, and Identity in the Bosnian Conflict”, in Edkins et al. (eds.), *Sovereignty and Subjectivity*, p. 24.

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 24-27. See also Campbell, *National Deconstruction*. For Derrida’s original discussion see Jacques Derrida, “Force of Law: The ‘Mystical Foundation of Authority’”, in Drucilla Cornell, Michael Rosenfeld, and David Gray Carlson (eds.), *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 3-67.

<sup>373</sup> Campbell, *Writing Security*, p. 39.



## Responsibility

The work of Campbell is also central to a critical re-theorization of responsibility in international relations. Using the philosophy of Derrida and Emmanuel Levinas, Campbell pays close attention to the undecidability of responsibility. For example, regarding the participants in the 1990 Gulf War, he notes how it became “impossible to draw any clear boundary which would clarify where agency and responsibility reside”.<sup>374</sup> This work also began a debate with another key theorist of responsibility – Daniel Warner. Warner is important because, as Campbell remarks, he also goes some way towards a “social” theorising of responsibility and ethics in international affairs through his use of the philosopher Martin Buber.<sup>375</sup> Of the extant literature on responsibility in international relations, it is this debate, and Campbell’s subsequent suggestion of a “deterritorialization of responsibility”,<sup>376</sup> that is most relevant to situating Chapter IV’s deconstruction of responsibility.

Warner and Campbell, like this thesis, share a view of ethics as fundamentally social – responsibility is always a responsibility to, and for, *others*.<sup>377</sup> Where they differ is in their characterisation and extent of this responsibility. Warner uses Buber to show that the relation to the other is split, into that of an *I-Thou* and an *I-It* relation.<sup>378</sup> Whereas the *I-Thou*, or *I-You*, relation to the other is one of openness and mutuality – treating the other (the *Thou/You*) as a subject equal to the self (the *I*) – the *I-It* relation treats the other as an object (the *It*) for the purposes of the self (the *I*) who remains a subject.<sup>379</sup> For Warner (and Buber), one must always maintain “the possibility of moving from one kind of relationship to another”.<sup>380</sup>

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<sup>374</sup> Campbell, *Politics Without Principle*, p. 43.

<sup>375</sup> *Ibid.*, fn. 12, pp. 100-101.

<sup>376</sup> David Campbell, “The Deterritorialization of Responsibility: Levinas, Derrida, and Ethics after the End of Philosophy”, in Campbell and Shapiro (eds.), *Moral Spaces*, p. 29. See also Campbell, *National Deconstruction*, p. 166.

<sup>377</sup> Daniel Warner, *An Ethic of Responsibility in International Relations* (Boulder, Co: Lynne Rienner, 1991), p. 21.

<sup>378</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21 and p. 111.

<sup>379</sup> Daniel Warner, “Levinas, Buber and the Concept of Otherness in International Relations: A Reply to David Campbell” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* Vol. 25, No. 1 (1996), pp. 112-113.

<sup>380</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.



In contrast, Campbell uses the thought of Levinas to show that the *I*, the subject – whether as individual or state – before it even *is*, is responsible to the other.<sup>381</sup> Buber’s *I* and the *Thou* are radically interdependent for Campbell and Levinas because the very possibility of the *I* is constituted and depends on the prior existence of the *Thou*.<sup>382</sup> Thus, when the other is suffering “there is no circumstance under which we could declare that it was not our concern”.<sup>383</sup> There is no ethics involved in the *I-It* relation for Campbell and Levinas, as the other is treated as an object (an *It*) for our own use. Rather, an ethical relation can only ever be one of *I-Thou*, where we are radically responsible for the other as a subject, prior to our own subjectivity.

Warner criticises Campbell’s Levinasian view of responsibility because, by disallowing the *I-It* relation, Levinas allows “no possibility for movement or choice between the two worlds”.<sup>384</sup> However, as Campbell points out, this criticism is unfounded as both Campbell and Levinas recognise that the *I-It* relation is all too common.<sup>385</sup> But this points to a larger problem with Warner/Buber: “[w]hy is the possibility of *I-It* relations desirable?” asks Campbell. Why should one want to retain the possibility of treating the other as an object for our own use? Levinas and Campbell are aware that *I-It* relations are “unavoidable”, but they are also fundamentally “undesirable, and are the very relations with the Other to be contested because of their unethical nature”.<sup>386</sup> The argument of this thesis is in fundamental agreement with Campbell on the undesirability of the *I-It* relation. Indeed, it is this irresponsible treatment of the other as object which will be the focus during the deconstruction of a responsibility to save others contained within British foreign policy (Chapter IV).

However, this is not to say that the thesis entirely subscribes to Campbell’s alternative theorization of responsibility. There are at least two things that separate the two. Firstly,

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<sup>381</sup> Campbell, *Politics Without Principle*, pp. 95-6.

<sup>382</sup> Campbell, “The Deterritorialization of Responsibility”, pp. 32-35.

<sup>383</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>384</sup> Warner, “Levinas, Buber and the Concept of Otherness in International Relations”, p. 115.

<sup>385</sup> David Campbell, “The Politics of Radical Interdependence: A Rejoinder to Daniel Warner” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* Vol. 25, No. 1 (1996), p. 134.

<sup>386</sup> *Ibid.*



in Chapter IV's Derridean reading of responsibility and its subsequent negotiation in Chapter VI, there is no reference made to Levinas. Campbell contrasts his use of Levinas to that of Simon Critchley, who concludes that deconstruction's undecidability cannot make political decisions and therefore requires supplementation (both an adding to and a replacing) by a Levinasian conception of unconditional responsibility.<sup>387</sup> Campbell, on the other hand, suggests that Levinas' idealisation of the state and politics themselves require a Derridean supplement in order to interrupt this ideal's potential "totalization".<sup>388</sup>

It is acknowledged that Derrida was both inspired by, and agrees with, much of what Levinas has to say concerning responsibility and hospitality. Indeed, the similarities and differences between the two are fine-grained and difficult to separate.<sup>389</sup> However, Campbell does not make a convincing case as to why a Levinasian supplementation of Derrida is necessary. His argument seems to hang on the fact that, just as an "unalloyed faith in Levinas" is "insufficient", so "the invocation of Derrida is similarly incomplete".<sup>390</sup> However, the insufficiency of deconstruction is "not because the arguments are inherently flawed but because politics cannot be resolved... by a resort to philosophy".<sup>391</sup> Though there is no necessary flaw in deconstruction, we cannot put unalloyed faith in it as a "philosophy" to resolve "politics".

This argument is problematic for several reasons. In the first instance, it relies on a division between politics and philosophy which cannot be upheld. It also appears odd that Campbell justifies his turning to Levinas, another philosopher, by the fact that philosophy cannot resolve politics. Surely this would suggest an appeal to something *other than* another philosophy/philosopher. But, most importantly, Campbell's argument suggests that if we do not supplement Derrida we are showing an almost religious faith

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<sup>387</sup> Simon Critchley, *The Ethics of Deconstruction: Derrida and Levinas* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1992), p. 189.

<sup>388</sup> Campbell, "The Deterritorialization of Responsibility", p. 42.

<sup>389</sup> For an excellent reading of the differences between Derrida and Levinas specifically in Derrida's reading of Levinas, see Alex Thomson, *Deconstruction and Democracy: Derrida's Politics of Friendship* (London: Continuum, 2005), especially pp. 103-143.

<sup>390</sup> Campbell, "The Politics of Radical Interdependence". p. 136.

<sup>391</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.



in deconstruction as a resolution. However, the reading of Derrida in Chapter VI is used specifically to keep responsibility *undecidable*, politics *unresolved* and *political*. Indeed, it treats this undecidability as the *condition of* politics and responsibility.

The second difference between this thesis and Campbell's work is that, while the reasoning behind his call for a "deterritorialization of responsibility" (as responsibility towards the other should not be limited by his/her existence within the inviolable borders of a nation-state)<sup>392</sup> is fully appreciated, a worry remains that such a deterritorialisation will also have a deresponsibilising effect. The removal of responsibility from any notion of a territorial 'home' endangers a key possibility of ethical enactment: hospitality.<sup>393</sup> After all, as Chapter V explains, without a home there is nothing to welcome the other into. Thus, while the territorialised responsibility can produce a terrifying "moral cartography"<sup>394</sup> by removing our responsibility for those outside our territory, it also allows for the possibility of another enactment of responsibility and ethics to which the analysis now turns.

### *Hospitality*

Unlike subjectivity and responsibility, hospitality is given little attention by IR theorists. This is partly because of its liminality, existing as neither simply a 'domestic' nor 'international' concept, but rather disturbing the opposition between the two. Noting Walker's explanation of traditional IR theory as structured around a differentiation between an 'inside' the state, constituted by community and justice, and an 'outside' the state, constituted by anarchy and a deferral of ethical community,<sup>395</sup> we can see why hospitality should be given more consideration in international relations. What could be more ethical than welcoming the other into our ethical community? As such, we could even perhaps say hospitality is constitutive of question of ethics and international

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<sup>392</sup> Campbell, *National Deconstruction*, p. 166.

<sup>393</sup> Dan Bulley, "Negotiating Ethics: Campbell, Ontopology and Hospitality" *Review of International Studies* Vol. 32, No. 4 (*forthcoming*, 2006).

<sup>394</sup> Campbell, *National Deconstruction*, p. 208.

<sup>395</sup> Walker, *Inside/Outside*, p. 152.



relations. Dillon, however, draws attention to the way the figure of a refugee disturbs this coherent picture. The fact that the refugee is neither inside nor outside means that the question of hospitality and the refugee “brings the very ‘inter’ of international relations to the foreground in a disturbing and unusual way”.<sup>396</sup>

Discussion of hospitality arises most often through a confrontation with, or reading of, Immanuel Kant, especially in *Perpetual Peace*. Derrida also gives Kant a privileged position in his reading of hospitality.<sup>397</sup> Kant proposed a system of ethical enactment in international relations through the cosmopolitan right to “universal hospitality”, while accepting the discourse of inside/outside. In the third Definitive Article for perpetual peace Kant talks about hospitality as “the right of a stranger not to be treated with hostility when he arrives on someone else’s territory”.<sup>398</sup> While such a stranger cannot claim the rights of a guest, they can claim a “*right of resort*, for all men are entitled to present themselves in the society of others by virtue of their right to communal possession of the earth’s surface”.<sup>399</sup> This view of hospitality has been left fundamentally unchanged by modern cosmopolitan theorists.<sup>400</sup>

Shapiro favourably contrasts this Kantian, cosmopolitan hospitality to the “radically inhospitable” security mapping of Samuel Huntington’s thesis of clashing civilisations.<sup>401</sup> However, this is not to say that cosmopolitan hospitality is ethically unproblematic. Shapiro notes that because of Kant’s attachment to state sovereignty, and thus his continued reliance on an inside/outside logic, he “lacked a sensitivity to peoples and nations that were not organised in the form of states”.<sup>402</sup> Nick Vaughan-Williams

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<sup>396</sup> Michael Dillon, “The Scandal of the Refugee: Some Reflections on the ‘Inter’ of International Relations and Continental Thought”, in Campbell and Shapiro (eds.), *Moral Spaces*, p. 101.

<sup>397</sup> See, for example, Jacques Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, translated by Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes (London: Routledge, 2001).

<sup>398</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, translated by H.B. Nisbet, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), p. 105.

<sup>399</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

<sup>400</sup> For example, see James Bohmann and Matthias Lutz-Bachmann, “Introduction”, and David Held, “Cosmopolitan Democracy and Global Order: A New Agenda”, in James Bohmann and Matthias Lutz-Bachmann (eds.), *Perpetual Peace: Essay’s on Kant’s Cosmopolitan Ideal* (London: MIT Press, 1997).

<sup>401</sup> Michael J. Shapiro, “The Events of Discourse and the Ethics of Global Hospitality” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* Vol. 27, No. 3 (1998), p. 697.

<sup>402</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 701.



also draws attention to this limited and limiting form of hospitality in his Derridean critiques of cosmopolitan thought.<sup>403</sup> Shapiro suggests that we move beyond this restricted hospitality to citizen/subjects of another state, towards subjects which Kant cannot think.<sup>404</sup> Such subjects would include Dillon's scandalous refugees, who resist the inside/outside distinction. Doty, for one, has begun to think these scandalous subjects from a deconstructive, hospitable point of view.<sup>405</sup>

While in fundamental agreement with Dillon, Shapiro and Vaughan-Williams, the major difference between their discussion and that of this thesis is that of *who* is granting hospitality to *whom*. Their focus is on the need to move beyond the state granting hospitality to the citizen of another state, but the 'subjects' examined in Chapter V are very different. Instead of states and individuals, Chapter V looks at the EU's foreign policy of hospitable 'enlargement' towards nation states. A concentration on the EU somewhat disturbs the logic of inside/outside, but it does not of necessity escape it. The temptation remains to reinstate it at a different 'level' of analysis, with the state now seen as the citizen/subject and the EU substituting for the state. Therefore, while this analysis will differ because of the different context, any examination of hospitality must remain wary of the ethical pitfalls Dillon, Shapiro and Vaughan-Williams highlight.

A useful example of the way ethical hospitality can be unethical is revealed through Shapiro's separation of attitudes to the 'home' which enables hospitality. The Levinasian comparison between the Abrahamic journey away from the home towards the other, never to return, and Odysseus's journey towards alterity, only to return to his home in Ithaca, is employed to illustrate these two attitudes. The Abrahamic journey demonstrates a treatment of alterity that "must remain infinitely other... not to be domesticated... [but] allowed to serve as a disruption of the self". Odysseus, who only journeys to return home, exemplifies a dialectical journey "in which alterity simply

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<sup>403</sup> See Nick Vaughan-Williams, "Protesting Against Citizenship" *Citizenship Studies* Vol. 9, No. 2 (2005), pp. 167-179; Nick Vaughan-Williams, "Beyond a Cosmopolitan Ideal: the Politics of Singularity", in Brassett and Bulley (eds.), 'Ethics in World Politics: Cosmopolitanism and Beyond?'.  
<sup>404</sup> Shapiro, "The Events of Discourse", p. 710.  
<sup>405</sup> Roxanne Lynn Doty, "Humane Borders and the Ethics of Responsibility", Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Town and Country Resort and Convention Center, San Diego, California, USA (22 March 2006).



serves the enhancement of the self’.<sup>406</sup> It is therefore suggested that global hospitality should, perhaps, embody a more ambivalent, open attitude to the ‘home.’

This excursus reflects the continuing stress that will be placed upon the importance of a territorial ‘home’ in Chapter V; a stress, it was suggested above, that Campbell is insensitive to. Unlike Campbell, Shapiro advises that “ethical practices realized as writing performances require a degree of unreading, unmapping, and re-writing”.<sup>407</sup> The ‘home’ must be unread *by degrees*, such that hospitality is still possible: such that there is still a home to invite the other into, while becoming a “community always open to unforeseeable encounter”.<sup>408</sup> The necessary return to the importance of subjectivity (as shown in Chapter V and VI) is also demonstrated by Shapiro, who ends by going back to the fragmented subject of hospitality. Thus “cosmopolitanism must begin at home”, through an “ethic of hospitality... to one’s collective self”, which always contains the other within it.<sup>409</sup>

This section introduced the ways in which the undecidables this thesis uses as levers in the deconstruction of ethics and foreign policy have been alternatively theorised. None of these concepts – subjectivity, responsibility or hospitality – are new to poststructuralist IR. While there are substantial differences in the way they are handled here, particularly in relation to subjectivity, there are also significant cross-overs, especially with the work of Campbell. The only areas of difference outlined with Campbell are over his supplementation of Derrida with the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas and his suggestion of a deterritorialization of responsibility – which potentially imperils an ethic of hospitality.

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<sup>406</sup> Michael J. Shapiro, “The Ethics of Encounter: Unreading, Unmapping the Imperium”, in Campbell and Shapiro (eds.), *Moral Spaces*, p. 66.

<sup>407</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>408</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>409</sup> Shapiro, “The Events of Discourse”, p. 713.



## Conclusion

This chapter has sought to build on the critique of FPA in Chapter I by demonstrating the way foreign policy will be read and deconstructed as text. While having many of the characteristics of a ‘methodology’ or ‘theory,’ deconstruction is neither. It cannot be simply applied to British and EU foreign policy. Rather, the value of deconstruction is the way that it operates regardless of a conscious subject to *operate* it. Simply put, deconstruction “is what happens”.<sup>410</sup>

Section one set out what it means to say that foreign policy will be read as text. This demanded an explanation of the logocentrism which orders western philosophy on the basis of a privileging of presence over absence. It was explained that this centrality of *logos* (meaning speech, reason, Word of God) forms the basis without foundation of a whole system of hierarchical binary oppositions. The central opposition which Derrida examines is that of speech, favoured as denoting presence, and writing considered merely derivative and thus connected to absence. By revealing how the absence which structures writing (as both representative and iterable) is equally constitutive of speech, Derrida demonstrates that all language, experience and history is textually constituted; our only access to ‘it’ is through representative discourse. Foreign policy is not something we can find, out there, a thing *itself*, rather ‘it’ is always discursively mediated and thus *written as text*.

While this first section illustrated deconstruction taking place, the second section explicated the ‘something-like’ general rules of deconstruction which could never be formalised outside of context. The two ‘phases’ of deconstruction were traced: the overturning of a binary hierarchy (for example, showing that speech is derivative of writing); and the displacement of this opposition. This displacement takes place by demonstrating that every logocentric opposition relies upon, and is produced by, *undecidable* terms such as the supplement and *différance*. Thus, deconstruction takes place in a text where undecidability disrupts its structure. To deconstruct a text, then,

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<sup>410</sup> Derrida, “Some Statements and Truisms...”, p. 85.



means looking for and noting how an undecidable operates to subvert its surrounding logic.

Finally, section three contextualised the forthcoming analysis of the three undecidables around which the discourse of ethics and foreign policy deconstruct in British and EU foreign policy. Subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality were all situated within poststructuralist IR literature and indications were given as to how the analysis of this thesis would both follow and break with these theorizations. It was especially important to illustrate that this thesis does not simply repeat the work of academics such as Campbell and Shapiro, but is heavily influenced by it.

The next three chapters are not the application of a ‘theory’ or ‘method’ to an empirical field of knowledge called ‘foreign policy’. Rather they outline the importance of the three concepts (subjectivity, responsibility, hospitality) to the *possibility* of a discourse of ethics and foreign policy, and subsequently reveal how they also constitute the *impossibility* of its own logic. They make it both possible *and* impossible, yet neither possible *nor* impossible; they reveal the undecidability of ethics and foreign policy. The im-possibility (not simply impossible) of an ethical foreign policy through *negotiation* demonstrates the affirmative aspect of deconstruction in Chapter VI.



# *Chapter III*

## *Subjectivity: Failing and Supplementing*

### *Introduction*

Chapter II both explicated how foreign policy can be read as text and drew out the deconstructive approach to reading a text. The three undecidables on which this thesis concentrates were then situated within poststructuralist IR literature. This chapter turns to the British and EU foreign policy texts and observes their deconstruction around the undecidable concept of subjectivity. While responsibility and hospitality (or hospitality as the way the EU exercises its responsibility) may seem more obviously important to the possibility of ethics and foreign policy, the construction of subjectivity, or rather, of the subject which can act ethically in world politics through its foreign policy, is of fundamental importance. Indeed, it allows the possibility for the representation of some ‘thing’, or ‘someone’, acting responsibly, hospitably or *ethically*.

The focus of this chapter is confined to the construction of the subject of ethics and foreign policy, but some discussion of ‘subjectivity’ and ‘the subject’ is necessary by way of introduction. A minimum definition, while desirable for clarity, would only be useful for thinking about how the subject was constructed at one time and by a specific philosophy. As Caroline Williams puts it, the “subject cannot be reduced to a homogeneity... There are as many histories as there are conceptions of the subject; *the* history of *the* subject does not exist.”<sup>411</sup> Nonetheless, Stuart Hall tells such a “highly simplistic” story of the subject as a “device entirely for the purpose of convenient exposition”.<sup>412</sup>

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<sup>411</sup> Caroline Williams, *Contemporary French Philosophy: Modernity and the Persistence of the Subject* (London: Athlone Press, 2001), p. 13.

<sup>412</sup> Hall, “The Question of Cultural Identity”, p. 281.



Hall's narrative begins with the "Enlightenment subject" of Descartes: a human person "as a fully centred, unified individual, endowed with the capacities of reason, consciousness and action".<sup>413</sup> The source of the subject's identity was the core of its self.<sup>414</sup> Williams agrees with this picture of Cartesian primacy (though it must be noted that others do not),<sup>415</sup> claiming that the essence of subjectivity for Descartes is "given by the cognitive capacities of the self alone", regardless of its relation to the world and other people/subjects.<sup>416</sup> Along with Kant's separation between subjectivity (that which knows and acts) and objectivity (that which is known and acted upon), this conception of the subject "has been viewed by many to constitute the dominant paradigm in Western political and philosophical thought".<sup>417</sup> Fundamentally it sees the subject as "the objectifying ground of all knowledge and as the foundation for all possible being".<sup>418</sup>

Hall continues his story of the subject with the sociological subject.<sup>419</sup> This subject retained an identity, its inner core, but this was no longer seen as "autonomous and self sufficient, but was formed in relation to 'significant others,' who mediated... the cultural world he/she inhabited". Identity came to be seen as formed through an interaction between the self and society.<sup>420</sup> Finally, Hall brings us to the 'postmodern' subject. Here, the subject's inner core, its identity, is fragmented and split. There is nothing fixed, permanent or essential about the postmodern subject's identity, rather it is "formed and transformed continuously in relation to the ways we are represented or addressed in the cultural systems which surround us".<sup>421</sup> This displacement of the Cartesian subject, he says, is performed by five great advances in social theory: those of Marx (and subsequently Althusser), Freud (and subsequently Lacan), de Saussure (and subsequently Derrida), Foucault and Feminism.<sup>422</sup>

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<sup>413</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 275.

<sup>414</sup> Edkins, *Poststructuralism and International Relations*, p. 21.

<sup>415</sup> See Etienne Balibar, "Citizen Subject", in Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor and Jean-Luc Nancy (eds.), *Who Comes After the Subject?* (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 33-57.

<sup>416</sup> Williams, *Contemporary French Philosophy*, p. 17.

<sup>417</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>418</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>419</sup> Hall, "The Question of Cultural Identity", p. 285.

<sup>420</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 275-6.

<sup>421</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 277.

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 285-291.



These differential displacements illustrate Williams' assertion that "*the* history of *the* subject does not exist."<sup>423</sup> Rather, subjectivity is always a constructed basis for knowledge and action, it is always a representation of something that is never present in and of itself. Nonetheless, the possibility of subjectivity is still of great importance to the possibility of ethics. Derrida observes that, even after the postmodern displacements of the subject, we must still ask "who or what 'answers' to the question 'who'?"<sup>424</sup> For Williams it remains crucial "to consider the position from which the subject may speak and act", as what is "still required by classical and deconstructive position alike is a certain responsibility".<sup>425</sup> The possibility of ethics demands a subject which can speak and act.

As stated, this chapter limits itself to the description and deconstruction of subjectivity only as it pertains to the possibility of ethics and foreign policy – the construction of a subject that can act ethically, responsibly and hospitably in world politics. Thus, when this chapter uses the terms 'subjectivity' and the 'subject' it does not refer to all constructions of subjectivity, but specifically the subject of ethics and foreign policy. British and EU foreign policy is replete with assertions of such subjectivity. Indeed, just days after becoming Foreign Secretary in 1997 Robin Cook launched the "ethical dimension" of British foreign policy with an immediate claim to a collective British ethical subject:

*We* are instant witness in *our* sitting rooms through the medium of television to human tragedy in distant lands, and are therefore obliged to accept moral responsibility for *our* response... *Our* foreign policy must have an ethical dimension and must support the demands of other peoples for the democratic rights on which *we* insist for *ourselves*.<sup>426</sup>

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<sup>423</sup> Williams, *Contemporary French Philosophy*, p. 13.

<sup>424</sup> Jacques Derrida, "'Eating Well,' or the Calculation of the Subject: An Interview with Jacques Derrida", in Cadava, Connor and Nancy (eds.), *Who Comes After the Subject?*, p. 98.

<sup>425</sup> Williams, *Contemporary French Philosophy*, p. 149.

<sup>426</sup> Cook, "Mission statement" – emphases added.



The claims to subjectivity, the ‘we’, the ‘our’ and the ‘ourselves’ are the basis for the ethical dimension. There would be no possibility of an ethical dimension without a ‘we’ to accept or enact it.

Such declarations are also a refrain of EU foreign policy from the beginning of the period under study. Javier Solana, in one of his first speeches as the new HR for the EU’s CFSP, asserted that the EU could not ignore others’ conflicts. “*Our* survival is not always at stake, but *our* moral standing is.” Europe, he claims, is “above all a community built on a set of principles and a set of values. And *we* must be intransigent when these fundamental values and principles are under threat.”<sup>427</sup> Again, ‘we’ must safeguard ‘our’ moral standing and principles, and this subjectivity allows the possibility of ethics and foreign policy.

This chapter proceeds in three sections. Firstly, a commentary is provided on the way British and EU foreign policy construct subjectivity, both their own and that of others in international politics. Subjectivity is constructed in both foreign policies as *the ability, or capacity, to take responsibility for the prevention of human suffering*. Here we begin to see how responsibility becomes the dominant signifier for these representations of ethics and foreign policy. As stated in the Introduction to this thesis, rather than subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality being strictly *separate* concepts in the foreign policy text, they all refer to a *responsible* relation to otherness, the ‘foreign’. The subject of ethics and foreign policy is the subject of responsibility, the subject that can take responsibility, while hospitality is the primary way the EU represents its enactment of responsibility.

The commentary contained in section one may sound as though a coherent ‘British’ or ‘EU’ subject is being *presupposed*. Rather, it examines the invocations and presuppositions of a constructed coherence contained within the text. This invocation is then deconstructed from two angles in sections two and three. The second section demonstrates how the centrality of the ‘failing state’ to Britain’s (and, less so, the EU’s) discourse of subjectivity is undermined by the terrorist attacks on London in 2005. This

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<sup>427</sup> Javier Solana, Speech to the Fernandez Ordonez Seminar, 14 January 2000 – emphasis added.



will generalise the ‘failing subject’ to show that *any* subject of international politics will always be both succeeding and failing, marking the presence *and* absence of subjectivity. The third section examines ‘who’ precisely is claiming responsibility in British and EU foreign policy. Rather than simply ‘Britain’ and ‘EU’ as autonomous, coherent, capable subjects, the ‘who’ changes from moment to moment. The resulting chain of supplementary signifiers for subjectivity corroborates the claim that, rather than a pre-existent entity capable of responsibility, the subject is produced as an effect of supplementary *différance*. Where this leaves the possibility of ethics and foreign policy will be examined in the conclusion.

### ***Constructing Subjectivity in British and EU Foreign Policy***

This first section asks how Britain and the EU construct their own *and others’* ethical subjectivity in international affairs. How do they constitute a coherent picture of themselves as a subject of ethics and foreign policy? The British and EU foreign policy texts have significant overlap and yet are very different in this regard, therefore each will be tackled in turn. The conception of subjectivity affirmed for both ‘Britain’ and other actors in the British text is highly assured. To be a subject is to be a member of the ‘international community’, which gives the subject both rights and responsibilities. It is *the capacity to accept and fulfil these responsibilities* which defines the subject in Britain’s ‘ethical’ foreign policy. ‘Britain’ in this case, considers itself a leading member of the international community.

In contrast, the EU discourse of subjectivity is differentiated and insecure. In terms of a general structure of subjectivity, it largely adheres to the British construction as that which is capable of taking responsibility. However, the EU represents *its own* status as a subject as highly circumspect. It describes itself as *maturing* toward the ability to take responsibilities globally. The greatest responsibility claimed is towards those *nearest to it*: a responsibility of proximity, or a territorialized responsibility. It is capable of enacting this responsibility as a *hospitality*, presenting its subjectivity in a regional



context as a 'home' which it welcomes others into. The former, more general sense of subjectivity, is the focus of this chapter; the latter is examined in Chapter V.

### *The Subject in British Foreign Policy*

The connection between the 'we' and the taking of responsibility is immediately apparent in Cook's inaugural foreign policy speech of the new Labour Government. "We" are constructed as "witnesses" to suffering, and as such are "obliged to accept moral responsibility for our response".<sup>428</sup> While the structure for this subjectivity is not yet in place, Cook nonetheless argues that the "ethical dimension" given to foreign policy "aims to make Britain a leading partner in a world community of nations".<sup>429</sup> The structuring of subjectivity around responsibility and community becomes clearer two months later when Cook declares the starting point of British foreign policy to be that "in the modern world all nations belong to the same international community", and as such "it is reasonable to require every government to abide by the rules of membership. They are set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."<sup>430</sup>

From 1999 onwards, this structuring idea of the international community develops. A conception of subjectivity is at the heart of this: the subject of international politics as *that which is capable of taking responsibilities* and accepting rights. Thus, in fleshing out the international dimension of his domestic 'Third Way', Blair emphasises over and again that its basis is an international community "defined by common rights and shared responsibilities"<sup>431</sup> for its members. In his speech to the Global Ethics Foundation in June 2000, Blair stresses that community, whether national or international is "based on

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<sup>428</sup> Cook, "Mission Statement".

<sup>429</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>430</sup> Robin Cook, "Human Rights Into a New Century", 17 July 1997.

<sup>431</sup> Tony Blair, "Facing the Modern Challenge: The Third Way in Britain and South Africa", 8 January 1999. Unless otherwise stated, all speeches, interviews and press conferences by Prime Minister Tony Blair have been downloaded from the Downing Street website: <http://www.10downingstreet.gov.uk> (accessed between 27 August 2004 and 1 May 2006).



the equal worth of all, on the foundation of mutual rights and mutual responsibilities”.<sup>432</sup> This idea was still being emphasised in British foreign policy by March 2004.<sup>433</sup>

Jack Straw adds steel to the argument, observing that “[t]he rights of members of the global community depend exclusively on their readiness to meet their global responsibilities.”<sup>434</sup> In this way, the British foreign policy text structures its concept of the subject as a member of the international community, with rights and responsibilities. However, Straw clarifies that the subject’s rights depend “exclusively” on the “readiness to meet their global responsibilities”. In other words, responsibilities come first. Essential to the definition of subject in the British foreign policy text is this *capacity to take responsibility*.

Nonetheless, despite the emphasis on responsibilities, subjects do have rights as members of the international community. They have the right to receive development aid and relief from their debt burden, to experience an unpolluted environment and to trade in free markets.<sup>435</sup> This latter element is underlined by the trade sanctions against Iraq, represented as a result of Iraq’s own choice to position itself outside the international community.<sup>436</sup> Equally, the ending of sanctions against Libya was associated with its *rejoining* the international community.<sup>437</sup> Subjects have the right to enter into international treaties and organisations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and even the EU. For example, Cook emphasised to the Bosnian government (in language that would become rife in EU foreign policy) that if they fulfilled their responsibilities, “[w]e can then welcome you back into the family of European nations.”<sup>438</sup> Blair went further, saying that if responsibilities were accepted, we have a “moral duty” to offer accession to the EU.<sup>439</sup>

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<sup>432</sup> Tony Blair, Speech to Global Ethics Foundation, Tübingen University, Germany, 30 June 2000.

<sup>433</sup> See Tony Blair, “Speech on the threat of global terrorism”, Sedgefield, 13 July 2004.

<sup>434</sup> Jack Straw, “Principles of a Modern Global Community”, 10 April 2002.

<sup>435</sup> Blair, “Facing the Modern Challenge”.

<sup>436</sup> Robin Cook, “Europe and America: The Decisive Partnership”, 15 January 1998.

<sup>437</sup> Tony Blair, “Prime Minister Welcomes Libyan Weapons of Mass Destruction Announcement”, 19 December 2003.

<sup>438</sup> Robin Cook, “Bosnia: a new hope”, 4 March 1998.

<sup>439</sup> Tony Blair, “The New Challenges for Europe”, 20 May 1999.



The *central* right of a subject is, however, “the right to live free from the threat of force”.<sup>440</sup> As a member of the international community, one’s sovereignty and territorial integrity is respected. If you are not part of the international community, this right is relinquished. Thus British foreign policy’s construction of subjectivity makes freedom from force *conditional*. Initially this is played down: the “principle of non-interference” remains valid, but it “must be qualified in certain respects”.<sup>441</sup> Later, this is represented as a *break* from the “traditional” philosophy of international relations which has “held sway since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648”.<sup>442</sup> It is no longer the case that “a country’s internal affairs are for it and you don’t intervene unless it threatens you, or breaches a treaty, or triggers an obligation of alliance”.<sup>443</sup> Denis MacShane thus declared in 2002 that “[t]he Westphalian era of inter-state relations is over. The days when what happened inside a state was of no interest to other nations is over.”<sup>444</sup> Mark Wickham-Jones suggests that the most interesting aspect of this early period in Labour’s foreign policy was the “quiet burial of the doctrine of non-intervention”.<sup>445</sup>

However, it is the fulfilment of one’s responsibilities that allow an actor to be considered a subject with rights in British foreign policy. What are these responsibilities? There is no definitive list but various claims are made, such as Cook’s above, that respect for human rights formed the “rules of membership” of the international community.<sup>446</sup> Bill Rammell, a Junior Minister at the Foreign Office under Jack Straw, observes that “[t]he core role of any state is to guarantee basic human rights: life, security, the rule of law. But some fail in this responsibility.”<sup>447</sup> Thus, the primary responsibility of a subject of ethics and foreign policy is to respect and protect the human rights of one’s population.

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<sup>440</sup> Blair, “Facing the Modern Challenge”.

<sup>441</sup> Tony Blair, “Doctrine of the International Community Speech”, Economic Club, Chicago, 24 April 1999.

<sup>442</sup> Blair, “Speech on the Threat of Global Terrorism”.

<sup>443</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>444</sup> Denis MacShane, “Diplo-Military Politics: The Future Strategic Context of Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution”, 25 April 2002.

<sup>445</sup> Mark Wickham-Jones, “Labour’s trajectory in foreign affairs: the moral crusade of a pivotal power?”, in Little and Wickham-Jones (eds.), *New Labour’s Foreign Policy*, p. 17.

<sup>446</sup> Cook, “Human Rights into a New Century”.

<sup>447</sup> Bill Rammell, “Why Human Rights Matter”, 25 November 2003.



Another general responsibility is that a subject must not threaten international peace and security, either by committing acts of genocide and producing refugees,<sup>448</sup> or by threatening its neighbours.<sup>449</sup> Subsequent to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 (9/11), two other responsibilities grew in importance within the British foreign policy discourse: a responsibility not to support terrorism;<sup>450</sup> and a responsibility neither to develop weapons of mass destruction (WMD), nor to proliferate them to other countries.<sup>451</sup> If others fail to meet these responsibilities, the international community itself has a responsibility to act.<sup>452</sup> Thus, by 2004, the principle of non-interference was no longer being buried quietly by Jack Straw:

States have the right to non-interference in their internal affairs; but they also have responsibilities, towards their own people, and towards the international community and their international engagements. Where those responsibilities are manifestly ignored, neglected or abused, the international community may need to intervene: the cost of failing to do so in Rwanda or in Bosnia still haunts us today.<sup>453</sup>

The construction of subjectivity in British foreign policy then comes down to this: if one does not fulfil one's (normally a state's) responsibilities, one ceases to be a member of the international community, and therefore ceases to be considered a subject of international politics. In this case, one can be treated as an *object*, something incapable of knowing and acting (taking responsibility), and thus only capable of being *known* and *being acted upon*. That which does not have the capacity to take responsibility thus becomes the *object* of a subject's responsibility.

There are also a range of responsibilities which link directly to some of the rights that were mentioned first. *These* responsibilities, however, are generally used in reference to

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<sup>448</sup> Blair, "Doctrine of International Community Speech".

<sup>449</sup> Blair, "Facing the Modern Challenge".

<sup>450</sup> For example, in relation to Syria and Iran: Tony Blair, Press Conference, 15 January 2004.

<sup>451</sup> For example, in relation to North Korea: Tony Blair, Doorstep press conference in Beijing, 21 July 2003.

<sup>452</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>453</sup> Jack Straw, "Shaping a stronger United Nations", 2 September 2004.



African nations – something that will become more important in Chapter IV. For example, the right to development aid depends upon the responsibility to use the aid productively and not corruptly.<sup>454</sup> The same goes for debt relief. To gain the benefits of free trade, access to markets and IMF/World Bank assistance, there is the responsibility to comply with internationally agreed rules on trade and market regulation.<sup>455</sup> In summing up the help Britain and the G8 gave African nations in 2002, Blair speaks of the rights and responsibilities of both sides. A massive increase in aid is granted, but only “provided the Africans keep their side of the bargain”,<sup>456</sup> their responsibility to make progress on education, infrastructure and governance. These responsibilities are later outlined as “a whole series of initiatives on the rule of law, on proper commercial and legal systems, on rooting out corruption, on respect for democratic rights, and the process of democracy”.<sup>457</sup> More or less specifically for Africans then, we can add to the list of responsibilities one must be capable of fulfilling to be considered a subject: the maintenance of the rule of law, ending corruption and preserving democratic processes (or putting them in place).

But what is the specificity of the *British* subject; what identity does the ‘we’ take on as a ‘we’ in international politics? Cook’s ‘Mission Statement’ aimed to “make Britain a leading partner in a world community of nations”, and as such, “a force for good in the world”.<sup>458</sup> At times Britain declares itself to be a global leader, such as when welcoming others back into the international community,<sup>459</sup> and on debt relief.<sup>460</sup> Britain apparently takes on *more* responsibility than other members of the international community. For example, Blair claims that Britain has a “special responsibility” for Africa.<sup>461</sup> When human rights have been threatened in Africa ‘we’ are said to be always at the forefront, taking responsibility.<sup>462</sup> Thus, in Sierra Leone, Britain did what it could to “save African

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<sup>454</sup> Blair, “Facing the Modern Challenge”.

<sup>455</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>456</sup> Tony Blair, Doorstep interview at G8 summit, 28 June 2002.

<sup>457</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>458</sup> Cook, “Mission Statement”.

<sup>459</sup> Specifically Nigeria, see Robin Cook, “Human Rights: Making the Difference”, 16 October 1998.

<sup>460</sup> Tony Blair, Speech to WSSD in South Africa, 2 September 2002.

<sup>461</sup> Tony Blair, “Partnership for African Development”, 7 February 2002.

<sup>462</sup> Rammell, “Why Human Rights Matter”.



nations from barbarism and dictatorship and be proud of it”.<sup>463</sup> Yet our leadership is not just evident in Africa. When the values of the international community – described as freedom, democracy and the rule of law – are threatened in Iraq, “Britain will defend them with courage and certainty”.<sup>464</sup>

### *The Subject in EU Foreign Policy*

This general construction of subjectivity as *the capacity to accept responsibility* is also in evidence from an early stage in the EU foreign policy discourse. However, in contrast to British foreign policy, the EU text focuses on affirming, justifying and describing its *own* status as a subject, its *own* capacity to accept responsibility. This is unsurprising when one considers the evident insecurity the EU demonstrates when claiming to be an independent, autonomous actor in international affairs. Chris Patten illustrates this on a visit to New Delhi:

The last time I came here, it was in my capacity as the British Development Minister. In those days, I never needed to explain what Britain was, or how it fitted into the world. My French or German counterparts – indeed representatives of any EU member state – were similarly never called upon to do so. But today I am here to represent the European Union. An entity, a construction, that is far from clear to many outsiders. And frequently opaque to some of those inside as well.<sup>465</sup>

Unlike ‘Britain’, the ‘EU’ is a problematic subject. Britain simply *is*, one does not even need to explain *what* or *that* it is, but the EU’s subjectivity needs to be proven, publicised, demonstrated. Thus Patten continues by stating that “Europe wants to live up to its international responsibilities... Europe’s Common Foreign and Security Policy

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<sup>463</sup> Tony Blair, Mansion House Speech, 13 November 2000.

<sup>464</sup> Tony Blair, Statement to Parliament on NATO Summit, 25 November 2002.

<sup>465</sup> Chris Patten, “The Role of the European Union on the World Stage”, Speech at the India Habitat Centre, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 25 January 2001. Unless otherwise stated, all speeches, interviews and press conferences by Chris Patten, Commissioner for External Relations, have been downloaded from the Commission archives website: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/archives/commission\\_1999\\_2004/patten/index.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/archives/commission_1999_2004/patten/index.htm) (accessed 7 July 2005).



now has operation (*sic.*) teeth.”<sup>466</sup> The EU’s problem living up to its international responsibilities means it rarely considers itself fully present as a subject of foreign policy. This is reflected in the academic literature, where Roy H. Ginsberg notes that scholars agree the EU “has an international ‘presence’” in that it is “visible in regional and global fora” (thus *present* only to the extent that it is *visible*), but that it only “exhibits some elements of ‘actorness’”.<sup>467</sup>

Many EU foreign policy speeches appear as justifications of this lack of full presence. In 2003, Javier Solana recalls what he claims is sometimes forgotten; it was only in 1993 that the EU began to build a CFSP.<sup>468</sup> While admitting that much “remains to be done”, he intriguingly suggests that in foreign policy “we are moving from a phase of theory to a phase of practice. We therefore stand on solid ground.” Crucially, Solana claims the EU now has significant responsibilities, “[b]ut I am convinced that the same reasons that give us responsibilities – our size and interests, our history and values – also equip us to take responsibilities.”<sup>469</sup> The movement from theory to practice, to the EU becoming a subject of international politics and *proving* its presence practically, is a movement towards taking on responsibilities.

Foremost in demonstrating the EU’s practical presence on the world stage (as responsible subject) is the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), which comes under the remit of the CFSP. For some, this represents the possibility of the EU moving from “weakness to power”.<sup>470</sup> Others see its operation as finally demonstrating the EU’s “claim to have become a fully-fledged actor in its own right”.<sup>471</sup> This is demonstrated by the examples of ESDP peace-keeping actions in Bosnia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).<sup>472</sup>

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<sup>466</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>467</sup> Ginsberg, “Conceptualizing the European Union as an International Actor”, p. 432.

<sup>468</sup> Javier Solana, “The voice of Europe on security matters”, Address to the Royal Institute for International Relations (IRR-KIIB), Brussels, 16 November 2003.

<sup>469</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>470</sup> Reinhardt Rummell, “From Weakness to Power with the ESDP?” *European Foreign Affairs Review* Vol. 7, No. 4 (2002), pp. 453-471.

<sup>471</sup> Antonio Missiroli, “The European Union: Just a Regional Peacekeeper?” *European Foreign Affairs Review* Vol. 8, No. 4 (2003), p. 502.

<sup>472</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 497-500.



Solana proposes that the ESDP is a sign that “the Union is not prepared to stand idly by in the face of crises. Nor always to let others shoulder responsibility.” Thus, as an instrument allowing the EU to “shoulder” responsibility, “[i]t will be a sign that the European integration dreamed by Europe’s founding fathers has come of age.”<sup>473</sup> The ESDP signifies the maturation of the EU as an international subject, its *becoming* capable of taking responsibility. A few months later, Solana claims that “[w]e need effective common foreign and security polities, with sufficient means and sufficient capabilities... The time has come for us to take our responsibilities seriously.”<sup>474</sup> Even by 2003, the EU appeared not to have *fully* achieved foreign policy subjectivity. Thus, Solana says, “the EU has achieved a degree of maturity in this area – without yet having entirely grown up”.<sup>475</sup>

Romano Prodi, President of the EU Commission (1999-2004), suggests that 9/11 had a big impact on the development of the EU as a subject. The terrorist attacks on New York and its implications,

...have forced Europe to face up to its own responsibilities in a new way. Until not very long ago, it was possible to conceive of Europe playing a part on the international stage as a ‘civil power’, an actor promoting specific principles and values without any autonomous capacity for political action. Today we cannot allow ourselves the luxury of that kind of Europe.<sup>476</sup>

In fact, this is similar to what Patten and Solana were saying pre-9/11 about the ESDP – the EU is being forced to accept responsibilities and thus become a subject of ethics and foreign policy. As Ann Deighton suggests, the ESDP ended “the age of ‘innocence’ of

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<sup>473</sup> Javier Solana, “The Development of a Common European Security and Defence Policy – the Integration Project of the Next Decade”, Speech to EU-Commission Institut für Europäische Politik Conference, Berlin, 17 December 1999.

<sup>474</sup> Solana, Speech to the Fernandez Ordonez Seminar.

<sup>475</sup> Javier Solana, Speech on the occasion of the Award of the ‘Honoris Causa’ Doctorate in Social Science, University of Wrocław, 2 October 2003.

<sup>476</sup> Romano Prodi, “Nation, Federalism and Democracy – The EU, Italy and the American Federal experience”, Speech at “The Nation, Federalism and Democracy” Conference, Trento, 5 October 2001.



*civilian power* Europe”.<sup>477</sup> For Prodi, however, this is not a neutral ending but a decisive *rejection* of the EU as ‘civilian power’. It is important to consider why this is rejected: a civilian power, for Prodi, has no “autonomous capacity for political action” in the international sphere.<sup>478</sup> In other words, it cannot fulfil its responsibilities and so cannot be considered a subject – autonomous, with control and capability of action. As Solana confirms, “[h]aving the capacity to use force when all other means fail is an *essential* component of a credible foreign policy.”<sup>479</sup>

Crucially, during 1999-2004, the foreign policy discourse of the EU never stabilized around an assured conception of its own subjectivity in *global* affairs. Whereas nation states’ capacities appear static and given, the EU’s capacities are represented as constantly developing and *maturing*. Considering the EU’s concentration on its own subjectivity, it is perhaps unsurprising that it has little to say about subjectivity in general. The rare times that subjectivity, as the capacity to accept responsibility, is attributed to another entity is in relation to the Balkans. This is dealt with in more detail in Chapter V, but a brief introduction is necessary here.

The EU accepts significant responsibility for the plight of the Balkans.<sup>480</sup> However, as the reconstruction process gets underway, it is increasingly emphasised by Prodi,<sup>481</sup> Patten<sup>482</sup> and Solana<sup>483</sup> that the Balkan nations themselves are responsible for their own recovery. For example, in a speech to the Kosovar Assembly in Pristina, Patten emphasises the role of the Assembly in a successful dialogue with Belgrade. This, he says, would,

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<sup>477</sup> Anne Deighton, “The European Security and Defence Policy” *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (2002), p. 728.

<sup>478</sup> Prodi, “Nation, Federalism and Democracy”.

<sup>479</sup> Javier Solana, Speech – Wehrkunde, Berlin, 5 February 2000.

<sup>480</sup> Chris Patten, “The Western Balkans: The Road to Europe”, Speech to German Bundestag, European Affairs Committee, Berlin, 28 April 2004.

<sup>481</sup> Romano Prodi, “The reality of enlargement”, Speech to the European Parliament, Brussels, 6 November 2002.

<sup>482</sup> Chris Patten, Speech to the Peace Implementation Council, Brussels, 23 May 2000.

<sup>483</sup> Javier Solana, Interview with *Dnevi Avaz* (BiH newspaper), 24 September 2003.



...send a very positive message to the international community, as it would show that your leaders are capable of assuming their responsibilities in a constructive manner. It would clearly show that when we say that Kosovo is on the path towards Europe it is not solely because geographically and politically you are part of the old continent but because you are mature enough to talk to those with whom you have extremely strong disagreements.<sup>484</sup>

In other words, EU foreign policy encourages Kosovo *to do exactly what the EU is telling itself to do*: grow up, mature and show themselves capable of assuming their responsibilities; show themselves capable of subjectivity. In this way, the EU replicates the discourse of British foreign policy, which constructs a more general subject of international affairs within an international community. The EU's representation of Kosovo's problem is essentially that of Kosovo showing itself to the international community as capable of responsibility. They are being told, and helped, to *become* a subject.

This section has revealed the EU's doubts regarding its own subjectivity, its own presence on the global stage. The area in which it is most confident, its status as a regional 'home', capable of taking responsibility for those closest to it, will be examined and deconstructed in Chapter V. However, as a subject of *world* politics the 'EU' emphasises its own insecurity throughout the period. It does not represent *itself* as ever fully present as subject. This means that the deconstructions in sections two and three which follow will primarily focus on subjectivity in British foreign policy. Nevertheless, they will resonate with EU foreign policy due to some overlap in their constructions of subjectivity.

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<sup>484</sup> Chris Patten, Speech to the Assembly of Kosovo, Pristina, 11 September 2003.



## *Failing Subjectivity*

The above section outlined the way British and EU text construct the subject. In British foreign policy especially, other bodies were conceived to be subjects if they have the capacity for accepting the responsibilities required of them. This section argues that the most important signification for entities deemed *incapable* was the *failing* state. State failure is what Doty, invoking Laclau and Mouffe, calls a “nodal point” – privileged discursive points, or master signifiers, that establish the oppositions which make meaning possible, and fix it there.<sup>485</sup> In this sense, the text of British foreign policy is built upon an oppositional structure of *succeeding* (subjects) and *failing* (objects). Initially, the overlap with EU foreign policy will be illustrated, but subsequently the focus will be upon the greater development of the failing state discourse in the British text. Through a Derridean reading of the terrorist attacks in London on 7 July 2005 (7/7), the succeeding/failing opposition will be overturned and displaced. It is established that to the extent subjectivity is possible, it will be an always already *failing* subjectivity.

### *Subject and Object: State Success/State Failure*

The concept of the ‘failing state’ plays no great role in the EU foreign policy text. Nonetheless, it develops as a line of representation post 9/11. The failing state is never particularly well defined here, but in October 2001 Solana begins to see economic and political failure of states as the key source of conflict in the world.<sup>486</sup> Patten uses them as an example of the inefficacy of unilateralism. Afghanistan, he says, should have taught us that we cannot ignore “these festering parts of an anarchically dangerous world. The international community has *no choice* but to work together to manage and resolve the problems caused by state failure.”<sup>487</sup> In 2003, Patten connects state failure to a failure of

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<sup>485</sup> Doty, *Imperial Encounters*, p. 10.

<sup>486</sup> Javier Solana, Speech at “The Fire and the Crystal” Conference, Rimni, 21 October 2001.

<sup>487</sup> Chris Patten, “Coherence and co-operation: the EU as promoter of peace and development”, Speech to the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm, 4 December 2001 – emphasis the original.



good government, poverty, AIDS, terrorism and international crime. As such state failure can neither be risked nor tolerated.<sup>488</sup>

The discourse on failing states is far more developed in British foreign policy. The biggest responsibility of any entity wishing to be considered a subject of international politics (and member of the international community) is the responsibility to be *successful*. This is the nodal point, the master signifier which all other responsibilities defer back to. In 1999, the then Junior Foreign Office Minister, Peter Hain, argued that Britain's policy in Africa was "clear, transparent and unequivocal. We will back success."<sup>489</sup> The successful, he claimed, are "those who stand up for democracy and human rights", who "want to reform their economies" and who commit to "freeing their people from poverty". But, "the reverse is true as well. We will not support corrupt governments... economic mismanagements... repression or bankroll dictatorship" because such "evils have failed Africa. And we will not back failure."<sup>490</sup> Here then we have the dichotomisation of international politics into successful and failing states. Successful means democratic, protecting human rights, reformed, poverty-free economies; failure means corruption, mismanagement, repression, dictatorship and evil.

State failure became central after Straw was made Foreign Secretary in 2001. States such as Somalia, Liberia and the DRC, Straw observed in 2002, are failing to such an extent that they resemble Thomas Hobbes' state of nature. "As members of an international community", Straw argues, we must be worried for the human rights and freedoms of those caught in this chaos.<sup>491</sup> And this chaos may spread, as it did in Afghanistan. A failing state cannot be a subject, as it is *incapable* of accepting its responsibilities. No longer *subjects*, capable of taking action and responsibility, failing states can only be seen as *objects* of international politics, capable only of *being acted upon* and taken responsibility *for*. Success/failure is a variation upon the classic opposition between subject/object.

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<sup>488</sup> Chris Patten, "Europe in the World: CFSP and its relation to Development", Speech to the Overseas Development Institute, 7 November 2003.

<sup>489</sup> Peter Hain, "Africa: Backing Success", 13 September 1999.

<sup>490</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>491</sup> Jack Straw, "Failed and Failing States", 6 September 2002.



According to Straw, in these incapable states, it is the international community which must take action. His claims that “[t]his leads me to the issue of Iraq”, provides a further division:

...in Iraq it is an all too powerful state – a totalitarian regime – which has terrorised its population in order to establish control. From one perspective, totalitarian regimes and failed or failing states are at opposite ends of the spectrum. But there are similarities: one is unable to avoid subverting international law; the other is only too willing to flout it. And in failing to secure widespread popular support, both have within them the seeds of their own destruction.<sup>492</sup>

The metaphor – seeds of destruction – is important and shall be called upon later. The point Straw is making here is clear: failing states do not live up to the responsibilities required of subjects; for some this is because they cannot (e.g. Somalia); for others this is because they refuse to (e.g. Iraq). This is a significant distinction. While Iraq may not *be* an object, as ‘it’ is certainly represented as *capable* of taking responsibility, *it chooses not to*. It deliberately flouts its responsibilities and thus is a subject *which can be treated as an object*. It places itself outside the international community by refusing to accept its responsibilities.

Now we have a division within the concept of the failing state. On the one hand, there are those regimes, like Milosevic’s Serbia in 1999, the Afghan Taliban in 2001 and Saddam Hussein’s Iraq in 2003, who are all failing in not *accepting* their responsibilities. This means that they can be treated with discursive violence: called evil, cruel and barbarous dictators (Milosevic);<sup>493</sup> described as the “sworn enemies of everything the civilised world stands for” (the Taliban);<sup>494</sup> or brutal, dictatorial,<sup>495</sup> barbarous,<sup>496</sup> evil,<sup>497</sup> depraved, cruel beyond comprehension and “without an ounce of humanity” (Saddam

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<sup>492</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>493</sup> Tony Blair, Statement to Parliament on the NATO Summit in Washington, 26 April 1999.

<sup>494</sup> Tony Blair, Speech to the Welsh Assembly, 30 October 2001.

<sup>495</sup> Tony Blair, Speech to the TUC Conference in Blackpool, 10 September 2002.

<sup>496</sup> Jack Straw, “Reintegrating Iraq into the International Community – A cause with compelling moral force”, 21 February 2003.

<sup>497</sup> Tony Blair, Answering questions at MTV forum, 6 March 2003.



Hussein).<sup>498</sup> These are still subjects, *but subjects that choose not to act as such and thus have all their rights removed*. Their rights, including that of non-interference, are removed because, as we heard earlier from Straw, “[t]he rights of members of the global community depend exclusively on their readiness to meet their global responsibilities.”<sup>499</sup>

On the other hand, there are the *genuine objects* of ethics and foreign policy, those that cannot *do*, but can only be *done to*, those *incapable of any responsibility*. These Blair describes in his 2001 Labour Party Conference speech as “the starving, the wretched, the dispossessed, the ignorant, those living in want and squalor from the deserts of North Africa to the slums of Gaza, to the mountain ranges of Afghanistan”.<sup>500</sup> This gives us a clear distinction between ‘Milosevic’ (and his regime) on the one hand, and ‘Serbians’ on the other, between ‘the Taliban’ and ‘Afghans,’ between ‘Saddam’ and ‘Iraqis.’ Blair clarifies this distinction, saying ‘we’ have no argument with the ‘Afghans’ as “[t]hey are *victims* of the Taliban regime. They live in poverty, repressed viciously, women denied even the most basic human rights and subject to a crude form of theocratic dictatorship that is as cruel as it is arbitrary.”<sup>501</sup> Thus, ‘the people’ (‘Afghans’, ‘Serbians’ and ‘Iraqis’) of these countries are seen as a hapless object, powerless victims incapable of assuming any responsibility for their barbarous leaders.

### *Generalising Failure: the Autoimmune Subject*

A deconstructive reading overturns and displaces hierarchical dichotomies. Thus, if the subject of British and, to a much lesser extent, EU foreign policy is opposed to an object, a deconstruction exposes the *object present within the subject*, the *failure inherent in every successful state*. Through a parallel reading of Straw’s medical analogy of state failure and Derrida’s concept of democratic autoimmunity, it is demonstrated that far

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<sup>498</sup> Tony Blair, Press Conference with President George Bush at Camp David, 27 March 2003.

<sup>499</sup> Straw, “Principles of a Modern Global Community”.

<sup>500</sup> Tony Blair, Party Conference Speech 2001, 2 October 2001, *The Guardian*, <http://politics.guardian.co.uk/labour2001/story/0,1212,562006,00.html> (accessed 3 March 2005).

<sup>501</sup> Tony Blair, Statement to the House of Commons, 8 October 2001 – emphasis added.



from being the subordinate terms, failure and objectivity are in fact general. The subject (that capable of taking responsibility) of ethics and foreign policy is always already an object (that which is incapable of taking responsibility). This overturns and displaces the hierarchy. Taking responsibility in foreign policy (achieving subjectivity) is both possible *and* impossible, yet neither simply one nor the other. The subject of ethics and foreign policy is inherently undecidable.

The British foreign policy text carefully divides the world into subjects (successful) and objects (failing) – though the latter hides a division between genuine objects and *subjects who act as objects*. Subjectivity is constructed in this manner firstly by dichotomy, but subsequently by the use of analogy. Straw’s keynote speech on ‘Failed and Failing States’ includes an important section sub-headed ‘Diagnosing State Failure’.<sup>502</sup> This section explicitly treats state failure as a *disease* or medical condition to be *treated*. After 9/11, Straw says, he asked officials at the Foreign Office to “look more closely at the underlying causes of state failure and identify a broad ‘at risk’ category”.<sup>503</sup> Those at risk could easily slide towards failure “causing significant problems for the international community”. Straw compares this to risk assessments made by corporations before investing in a certain market. Governments “now need to put similar calculations at the heart of their foreign policy”. This leads to a medical analogy:

In medicine, doctors look at a wide range of indicators to spot patients who are at high risk of certain medical conditions – high cholesterol, bad diet, heavy smoking for example. This does not mean they ignore everyone else nor that some of those exhibiting such characteristics are not able to enjoy long and healthy lives, against our expectations. But this approach does enable the medical profession to narrow down the field and focus their efforts accordingly. We should do the same with countries.<sup>504</sup>

In a suggestion reminiscent of the computational analyses of foreign policy seen in conventional FPA (Chapter I), Straw recommends that with sharpened criteria and weighting, we can and should be able to *intervene before states fail*. “Returning to my

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<sup>502</sup> Straw, “Failed and Failing States”.

<sup>503</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>504</sup> *Ibid.*



medical analogy, prevention is better than cure. It is easier, cheaper and less painful for all concerned.”<sup>505</sup>

The fundamental test of the onset of such disease and failure is the health of human rights. Straw notes that “the key measure of a state’s success is the extent to which it guarantees the human rights of its population”.<sup>506</sup> Thus, human rights and the rule of law should be used as an “early warning system” of future crises and state failure.<sup>507</sup> To extend Straw’s medical analogy, we could say that human rights are the immune system of the international community. They reveal signs of disease and can be used to fight against this disease both by those within the state and, if need be, by the international community. Thus, the first line of Straw’s definition is that a state fails when it is unable to “control its territory and guarantee the security of its citizens; to maintain the rule of law, promote human rights and provide effective government”.<sup>508</sup> To establish failure, one must first ask of a state whether there are areas of its territory the government cannot control, significant ethnic or religious tension or terrorist activity.<sup>509</sup> Fundamentally, a state’s success depends on whether it is strong enough to control such tension and activity and maintain the safety, security and human rights of its citizens.

Derrida used a similar medical analogy, that of ‘autoimmunity’, to explain the contradictory, even suicidal, nature of democracy. Democratic states essentially work against their own ‘success,’ against their own subjectivity in the terms of this thesis. ‘Autoimmunity’ is a “strange illogical logic by which a living being can destroy, in an autonomous fashion, the very thing that is supposed to protect it against the other”.<sup>510</sup> It describes a biological process in which an organism’s immune system turns on itself, on

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<sup>505</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>506</sup> Jack Straw, “Human Rights Ensure International Security and Prosperity”, 18 April 2002.

<sup>507</sup> *Ibid.*, repeated in Jack Straw, “Re-ordering the World”, 25 March 2002.

<sup>508</sup> Straw, “Failed and Failing States”.

<sup>509</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>510</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, translated by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 123.



its own cells, thus destroying its own immunity. Hence it is “quasi-*suicidal*” as it “works to destroy its own protection, to immunize itself *against* its ‘own’ immunity”.<sup>511</sup>

Democracy is not just a system of government confined to the state for Derrida. Following Plato’s portrait of the democrat in the *Republic*, Derrida associates democracy with freedom/liberty (*eleutheria*) and license (*exousia*), which is also whim, free will, ease, freedom of choice, the right to do as one pleases. Thus, from Ancient Greece onwards, ‘democracy’ is conceived on the basis of this freedom.<sup>512</sup> This freedom and license associates itself with the concept of human rights, the rights which protect one’s democratic freedoms. As such, both Britain and the EU can be seen to define their own subjectivity (as those with a responsibility to protect such rights and freedoms) as successful – and successful *as democratic*. Yet, the point of autoimmunity is to show that such democratic subjectivity attacks its own defences from within.

This can happen for at least two reasons. Firstly, the very openness of such democracy, the free speech it allows, the right to stand for election to public office, and so on, can allow a party intent on ending democracy to triumph legitimately by election. An example used by Derrida is Algeria in 1992, where an extremist Islamic party was expected by many to triumph, to “lead democratically to the end of democracy”.<sup>513</sup> In this situation, the Algerian government decided “to suspend, at least provisionally, democracy *for its own good*, so as to take care of it, so as to immunize it against a much worse and very likely assault.”<sup>514</sup> Democracy always has this quasi-suicidal possibility within itself – it may commit suicide (impose authoritarian rule and end democracy) to prevent its murder (the democratic end to democracy).

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<sup>511</sup> Jacques Derrida, “Autoimmunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides – A Dialogue with Jacques Derrida”, in Giovanna Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jurgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), p. 94.

<sup>512</sup> Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 22.

<sup>513</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>514</sup> *Ibid.*



The second autoimmune reaction is far more applicable to our current deconstruction. The true terror of autoimmune subjectivity comes through terrorism.<sup>515</sup> 9/11, the March 2004 train bombings in Madrid, and 7/7 all attest to how the openness and freedom of a successful, democratic, subject can literally be seen as “contain[ing] the seeds of its own destruction” (as Straw says of failing states).<sup>516</sup> Those who flew planes into the World Trade Center in New York were armed and trained to fly in the US;<sup>517</sup> similarly, it would appear that the Madrid train bombings were perpetrated by a group of North Africans gathered in Spain.<sup>518</sup> In Britain, the bombers were British nationals, educated in extremist views, armed and trained almost entirely in Britain.<sup>519</sup> They were allowed to attend meetings where terrorism was praised and were encouraged to acts of murder, all the time in Britain. On the 7 July 2005, these British nationals were allowed to travel to, and through, a capital city carrying deadly bombs without let or hindrance.<sup>520</sup>

The successful democratic subject, is here caught in a double bind. On the one hand, the very openness of Britain and the EU’s democratic culture of freedom and rights, which signify precisely success and subjectivity, are in fact *the very source of their own failure as subjects*. Britain and the EU can no longer claim to protect the human rights, freedoms and security of their own citizens (the definition of a successful state/subject), and specifically *because of the human rights they seek to protect*. On the other hand, however, what is represented as the necessary solution to this suicidal openness is a strengthening of the invasive powers of the state and a basic suspension of human rights and democratic freedoms.

This was revealed in the starkest terms on 22 July after the Metropolitan Police implemented *Operation Kratos*, which involved a ‘shoot-to-kill’ policy towards suspected suicide bombers. The Brazilian electrician Jean Charles de Menezes was shot seven times in the head and once in the shoulder as he boarded a train at Stockwell

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<sup>515</sup> See Derrida, “Autoimmunity”, fn. 7, pp. 187-188.

<sup>516</sup> Straw, “Failed and Failing States”.

<sup>517</sup> Ronan Bennett, “Inside the mind of a terrorist” *The Observer*, 22 August 2004.

<sup>518</sup> Giles Tremlett, “Madrid school used by British on bombers’ list” *The Guardian*, 2 July 2004.

<sup>519</sup> Duncan Campbell and Sandra Laville, “British suicide bombers carried out London attacks, say police” *The Guardian*, 13 July 2005.

<sup>520</sup> *Ibid.*



underground station.<sup>521</sup> Thus ‘Britain’ was not only incapable of protecting human rights on 7 July; less than two weeks later it was actively attacking them, attacking its own immune system. The immune system continued to be attacked with proposals and measures instituted by the Labour government, presented precisely as a *necessary* curb on human rights. Primary amongst these was the attempt to increase to 90 days the period of possible detention without trial of terrorist suspects. Those who opposed and eventually defeated this measure were branded “irresponsible” for their defence of human rights by Blair.<sup>522</sup>

The autoimmunity of the subject means that its success can only ever also be *failure*. Democratic rights are suspended in order to preserve them. The double bind of the successful, *healthy*, subject is that it necessarily attacks *its self*, its “early warning system”, making itself *diseased* – whether by terrorists attacking it due to its very openness, or by its own closure through suspension of democratic rights. Subjectivity (*success*), that which is capable of taking responsibility for its own and others’ citizens security, rights and freedoms, cannot help but always be inhabited by objectivity (*failure*).

To some extent, this structural failure is acknowledged within the foreign policy text. In an interview with the BBC after 7/7, Straw was asked what reassurances could be given that this will not happen again. He replies that the only reassurance is to “level with people... *We cannot provide a reassurance* that nothing like this will happen in the future... We have been successful in many ways, but *you can never provide 100 per cent security*.”<sup>523</sup> If we recall, Rammell’s definition of a state’s core role is to “guarantee basic human rights: life, security, the rule of law”.<sup>524</sup> Straw’s own definition of state failure is when it is unable to “control its territory and guarantee the security of its

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<sup>521</sup> Peter Walker, “Q&A: the De Menezes investigation” *Guardian Unlimited*, 17 July 2006, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/menezes/story/0,,1822504,00.html> (accessed 19 July, 2006).

<sup>522</sup> Tony Blair, Monthly Downing Street press conference, 7 November 2005.

<sup>523</sup> Jack Straw, Media Interviews, Gleneagles, 7 July 2005 – emphasis added.

<sup>524</sup> Rammell, “Why Human Rights Matter”.



citizens”.<sup>525</sup> If no assurance can be given and *insecurity* is inherent, then there *can be no successful state/subject*.

However, as Derrida makes plain, there is something yet more disturbing for the possibility of subjectivity. The most unsettling element of autoimmunity is that it is always a matter of the *self* revealing the impossibility *of the self*.

... what I call the autoimmune consists not only in harming or ruining oneself, committing suicide or threatening to do so, but, more seriously still, and through this, in threatening the I [*moi*] or the self [*soi*], the *ego* or the *autos*, ipseity itself, compromising the immunity of the *autos* itself: it consists not only in compromising oneself but in compromising the self, the *autos* – and thus ipseity. It consists not only in committing suicide but in compromising *sui-* or *self-*referentiality, the *self* or *sui-* of suicide itself. Autoimmunity is more or less suicidal, but, more seriously still, it threatens always to rob suicide itself of its meaning and supposed integrity.<sup>526</sup>

The very fact that this endangering of the subject is done *by the self* and *to the self* is the most terrifying thing about terrorism; it reveals that there is no *self-same* self in the first place. The self is fragmented, constituted by *difference* as well as sameness, a difference that *attacks* the coherent self-sameness of the subject. As outlined, the terrorists on 7/7 were British nationals operating domestically. No matter how much we try to *exteriorise* terrorism, it is always more or less *interior*, it “has something ‘domestic,’ if not national, about it”.<sup>527</sup>

Attempts to *exteriorise*, to *make foreign*, the terrorism of 7/7 occurred in several ways. Firstly, on the day of the attacks, the *Foreign* Secretary was called upon to conduct a range of media interviews<sup>528</sup> in what is surely the *Home* Secretary’s territory. This could be explained by Straw being a senior member of the Government. However, secondly, Straw was the *only* member of the Government (alongside Blair) to be included with opposition party leaders in a meeting with Muslim community leaders about the

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<sup>525</sup> Straw, “Failed and Failing States”.

<sup>526</sup> Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 45.

<sup>527</sup> Derrida, “Autoimmunity”, fn. 7, p. 188.

<sup>528</sup> For example with *Guardian Unlimited*, the BBC and ITV News; see Jack Straw, Media Interviews, Gleneagles, 7 July 2005.



bombings. Why should this be the case? Again, in an apparently *domestic* matter such as this, it would normally be the *Home* Secretary who is included. In fact, this is another attempt to *exteriorise* and *make foreign* this attack *by the self on the self*. Thirdly, and finally, the most explicit exteriorisation of terrorism comes when Blair, two months on, separates the bombers from their *ideology*. “The terrorist attacks in Britain on 7 July have their origins in an ideology born thousands of miles from our shores.”<sup>529</sup> Later, Blair focuses on Mohammed Sadiq Khan (the “ringleader” of the 7/7 bombers), asserting that “[h]e may have been born here. But his ideology wasn’t.”<sup>530</sup>

We can see here that the bombings of 7/7 have disturbed the simple inside/outside, self/other, domestic/international boundary upon which Britain’s subjectivity is built (as a successful state, which has the capacity to responsibly protect ‘its’ citizens both within ‘its’ territorially drawn state, *and* in others’ territorially drawn states). This exteriorisation of terrorism and insecurity is an attempt to make ‘Britain’ as subject appear less autoimmune (as the attack came from the *other* not the *self*), less unstable, less incapable, less fragmented, less *failing*. Yet, as Derrida observes, this is the most effective type of terrorism, that which “seems external and ‘international,’ is the one that installs or recalls an interior threat, *at home*... and recalls that the enemy is *also always* lodged inside the system it violates and terrorizes”.<sup>531</sup> Attempts at exteriorisation will always fail because it recalls the fact that Sadiq Khan *was* British, that his ‘ideology’ *was* taught to him in Britain, that the attack was *fundamentally a ‘British’ attack on ‘Britain’*.

Now we are in a position to appreciate the aptness of Straw’s medical analogy. What Straw describes is the structure of *all* subjectivity. If failing subjects are diseased, then they are far from abnormal. The successful/failing dichotomy is reversed and displaced by the generalisation of failure. The double-bind of autoimmunitary subjectivity means that Britain and the EU can never be anything but failing subjects/objects – and *by their own description* – attacking themselves and putting their very ‘selves’ in doubt. Either

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<sup>529</sup> Tony Blair, Speech to the General Assembly at the 2005 UN World Summit, 15 September 2005.

<sup>530</sup> Tony Blair, “Clash about Civilisations”, 21 March 2006.

<sup>531</sup> Derrida, “Autoimmunity”, fn. 7, p. 188.



their openness allows their subjectivity to be attacked from within or they commit suicide by attacking this very openness which makes them *what they claim to be*. Their inherent autoimmunity means that they undo their own understanding of their subjectivity; *they 'themselves' are incapable of accepting responsibility* and this reveals the instability of the 'themselves'. 'Britain' and the 'EU' are always already both subject *and* object, yet fully *neither* at the same time. Their autoimmune subjectivity is inherently undecidable.

### ***Supplementing the Subject(s)***

The above section has demonstrated the way in which subjectivity, mainly in the British foreign policy text, relies upon an internally contradictory notion of success over failure. When failure is shown to be general, that all subjects *must* fail by their own definition, we can see that the subject of ethics and foreign policy is always inhabited by its object. Another approach to the deconstruction of subjectivity would be to ask what precisely is affirmed as subject of ethics when Blair, Straw, Cook and so on, say 'we' or 'our'.

This section concentrates again on the British foreign policy text, while making reference to the EU. Who, or what, is this 'we' affirmed by the British and EU foreign policy establishment? Is it the same entity every time? If not, what implications does this have for the presence of the subject itself? This section argues that the affirmation of a 'we' is that of a different 'subject' at different times. Rather than demonstrating several subjects, this merely shows the way the 'we', the subject, that which can take responsibility, never fully achieves this ability at any point. The 'we' attaches itself to a linked chain of supplementary signifiers whose origin is not a present subject, but a non-originary *différance*.



### *Who or What is the Subject?*

Who, or what, answers to the question ‘who’ in British and EU foreign policy? Who, or what is it that takes responsibility? At times, though very rarely in both cases, it is ‘Tony Blair’ and ‘Javier Solana’ who are affirmed as the subject of their ‘ethical’ foreign policies. While it is the ‘we’ that has been drawing attention, the ‘I’ is also used when taking responsibility. When asked in an interview if he felt responsible for what happened in Abu Ghraib, Blair responded that “I feel a responsibility for everything that happens in Iraq.”<sup>532</sup> Asked why the EU failed to speak with one voice over Iraq, Javier Solana agrees that “[t]here we failed.” It was the ‘we’ of the ‘EU’ that failed. Yet Solana goes on to take personal responsibility, observing that “this is most bitter for me, as I saw this as my task”.<sup>533</sup> Straw manages to further diffuse the concepts of responsibility and subjectivity. Speaking of the decision to invade Iraq, Straw claims, “I believe that I and we and the British Government and above all the British Parliament made the right decision.”<sup>534</sup> But which is the subject taking responsibility for the decision here? Is it the ‘I’, the ‘we’, the ‘British Government’ or the ‘British Parliament’?

Even when a ‘we’ is affirmed, it is very rare that this ‘we’ is *simply* ‘Britain’ or the ‘EU.’ For the EU this is often, as has been mentioned, because there is an insecurity about its own subjectivity beyond its region. We can see this in operation when Solana, having claimed a few months earlier that the EU failed as a subject of foreign policy over Iraq, now says that it was not the EU’s responsibility.

I think it would have been better to have a common position on Iraq... [but] it was not a possibility for those four members of the Security Council that belong to the European Union to have a common position. But it is a problem for them, not a problem for the European Union. It’s at this point, it’s a subject which is beyond the European Union.<sup>535</sup>

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<sup>532</sup> Tony Blair, Interview with Channel 4 in Istanbul, 28 June 2004.

<sup>533</sup> Javier Solana, Interview with *Tasspiegel*, 26 March 2003.

<sup>534</sup> Jack Straw, Interview BBC Radio 4 on the Draft Iraqi Constitution, 30 August 2005.

<sup>535</sup> Javier Solana, Interview with BBC Breakfast with Frost, 13 July 2003.



It is no longer a problem that the EU is incoherent as a subject of ethics and foreign policy. It is simply stated that the EU cannot take responsibility in this matter – essentially Solana affirms the EU as an object, or failed subject, in this discourse – and the problem is now one for individual member states. Thus subjectivity passes from the EU towards its members and this does not seem to trouble Solana in the way it appeared to a few months earlier.

There is a similar, though perhaps less predictable problem with the subjectivity of ‘Britain’. From the end of 1998 onwards, Blair begins to imply that the subject of British foreign policy is no longer ‘Britain’; often the ‘we’ is the ‘international community’, which is then charged with taking responsibility. For example, speaking in September 1998 regarding Kosovo, Blair notes that the *international community*, rather than Britain, has “clear responsibilities”.<sup>536</sup> These affirmations increase in 1999 around the time Blair formalised the importance of ‘community’ in his ‘Doctrine of International Community’ (DIC) speech. If countries do not live up to their responsibilities, Blair argues, “the international community has a responsibility to act”<sup>537</sup> – not Britain. Similarly, Cook observes that, faced with overwhelming humanitarian violence, the international community must intervene.<sup>538</sup>

This probably reaches its zenith when Blair is answering *for the international community* rather than for Britain. At Prime Minister’s Question Time in 2006, Sir Menzies Campbell asked whether, with hundreds of thousands dead and two million people displaced, “have we not failed the people of Darfur?”<sup>539</sup> One can perhaps assume that when Campbell asks about a ‘we’ in the British Parliament, to the British Prime Minister, he is asking about ‘Britain’ and *its* failure to take responsibility. Blair’s response was revealing, beginning with: “[t]he international community is failing the people of Darfur...”<sup>540</sup> In one sense this response demonstrates that the international

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<sup>536</sup> Tony Blair, “A New Era of International Partnership”, 21 September 1998.

<sup>537</sup> Blair, “Facing the Modern Challenge”.

<sup>538</sup> Robin Cook, “Guiding Humanitarian Intervention”, 19 July 2000.

<sup>539</sup> Sir Menzies Campbell, Prime Minister’s Question Time, 25 January 2006, <http://www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2006-01-25a.1421.7> (accessed 16 June 2006).

<sup>540</sup> Tony Blair, Prime Minister’s Question Time, 25 January 2006.



community is failing to accept its responsibility, and thus showing its failure as a subject. But in another, it shows that Blair is now answering for the international community. The subject, the 'we' and 'our' affirmed by British foreign policy since late 1998, has often been the 'international community'.

Questioning the subject of ethics and foreign policy in the British text becomes even more complicated in the period after 9/11. This is where we see the appearance of an entity called the 'international coalition'. By the end of October 2001, the 'international community' has been replaced in Blair's representations of British foreign policy, by the "international coalition" which "remains strong".<sup>541</sup> Making a tour of the Middle East, apparently gathering support for this new subject, Blair stops in Riyadh and thanks Crown Prince Abdullah and Saudi Arabia for their assistance; "[t]hey are very much part of the international coalition against terrorism."<sup>542</sup> A clear separation is made between the 'international coalition' and the 'international community' when Blair thanks the Austrian Chancellor, who has been "immensely important in sustaining this international coalition against terrorism, and the fact that that coalition is so broad has, I think, been something of enormous comfort to the international community".<sup>543</sup>

The 'international coalition' falls into disuse as a subject of British foreign policy after the invasion of Afghanistan. Indeed, in the escalation towards conflict in Iraq, it is the subjectivity of the United Nations (UN) which is both affirmed and questioned. For example, in November 2002, the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 1441 (demanding that Iraq allow the re-entry of, and comply with, UN weapons inspectors) was represented by Straw as showing that the "UN has declared itself ready to accept its responsibilities".<sup>544</sup> The UN now appears to be the privileged signifier for the subjectivity of the international community itself. It is further endowed with subjectivity in 2003, when Blair claimed that by "going down the UN route we gave the UN an

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<sup>541</sup> Blair, Speech to the Welsh Assembly.

<sup>542</sup> Tony Blair, Doorstep interview with the Prime Minister in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 1 November 2001.

<sup>543</sup> Tony Blair, Doorstep interview with the Prime Minister and Chancellor Wolfgang Schuessel of Austria, 16 November 2001.

<sup>544</sup> Jack Straw, "The Role of Free Press in Foreign Policy", 16 November 2002.



extraordinary opportunity and a heavy responsibility”.<sup>545</sup> The opportunity is to “meet the menace” of Iraq “collectively and as a united international community... The responsibility, however, is to deal with it.”<sup>546</sup>

The UN seems to be endowed with subjectivity by the British foreign policy text and then put on trial *as a subject*: it has the right to be considered the forum for action by the international community, but only if it can accept the responsibility to deal with this. This representation builds such that it is not only the UN that is questioned as a subject, but the international community itself. In two press conferences held the same day, Blair declares Iraq to be a “test” for the international community.<sup>547</sup> Shortly before the attempt to secure a second UN Security Council Resolution (authorizing the invasion of Iraq) fails, a “warning” is issued to the international community:<sup>548</sup> if Iraq could not be tackled “as a unified international community, then our ability to cope in a unified way with future crises... will be hugely diminished”.<sup>549</sup> Nonetheless, despite the UN and the international community’s failure to accept its responsibility over Iraq, this failure is short lived. By 2006, as quoted earlier, Blair is again answering on behalf of the international community as the subject of British foreign policy.

### *Chain of Supplements*

As we can see then, there is no clear answer to the question of who answers to the question ‘who’ in British and EU foreign policy. For the EU, subjectivity is variously invested in ‘Solana’, the ‘EU’ and, when the latter fails by being *incapable*, the individual member states. In the British text the subject could be seen as ‘Blair,’ ‘Britain’, the ‘international community’, the ‘international coalition’ and the ‘UN’. But

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<sup>545</sup> Tony Blair, “Let the United Nations mean what it says and do what it means: Speech to Labour Party Spring Conference”, 15 February 2003 <http://www.labour.org.uk/news/tbglasgow> (accessed 3 March 2006).

<sup>546</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>547</sup> Tony Blair, Press conference with PM and Spanish PM Jose Maria Aznar; and Press conference with PM and President Bush at the White House, 31 January 2003.

<sup>548</sup> Tony Blair, Statement to Parliament following his meeting with President Bush, 3 February 2003.

<sup>549</sup> Tony Blair, Joint press conference with PM and Spanish PM Jose Maria Aznar, 28 February 2003.



what does this show us? What is the relationship between these various bodies that are endowed with subjectivity? Why is there a need for so many, especially in British foreign policy?

The relation between these entities can be considered one of supplementarity. When British foreign policy no longer answers for 'Britain' but also for the 'international community', we can see that the 'international community' is here being used as a supplement to the subjectivity of 'Britain.' As outlined in Chapter II, a Derridean 'supplement' has two meanings. Firstly, it is an insignificant and inessential extra, a surplus to what was already complete in and of itself.<sup>550</sup> In this understanding, the 'international community' is simply added to the British foreign policy text as a surplus, to add to the responsibility already accepted by 'Britain'. It is inessential, though helpful, to have the international community's support for foreign policies regarding Kosovo and Sierra Leone.

However, the second meaning of a supplement is that the very possibility of *adding to* something, immediately questions that thing's completeness. The second term thus "adds only to replace" the first.<sup>551</sup> If 'Britain' is a subject, fully capable of accepting responsibility, why should it be nice to have the support of the 'international community'? It would be entirely unnecessary. Equally, why should it be, as Blair claimed, that the breadth of the 'international coalition' should comfort the 'international community'?<sup>552</sup> Surely, if 'Britain' or the 'international community' were capable of accepting responsibility on their own, the breadth of the 'international coalition' would be wholly irrelevant. Rather, the supplementation of each (of 'Britain' by the 'international community', and subsequently of the 'international community' by the 'international coalition') reveals that the initial subject was insufficiently capable: *insufficiently a subject*. Thus, it required an addition, which inevitably replaces the first term.

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<sup>550</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 145.

<sup>551</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>552</sup> Blair, Doorstep interview with the Prime Minister and Chancellor Wolfgang Schuessel of Austria.



Yet, as we have seen, there is a perpetual movement of supplementation, especially in British foreign policy. *Each* ‘subject’ is found to be insufficiently endowed with subjectivity: inadequately capable of taking responsibility. We have seen how the ‘UN’ is criticised for failing the test of subjectivity set up for it,<sup>553</sup> and equally “we”, the “international community”, Blair says, is failing in Darfur.<sup>554</sup> Therefore each needs supplementation, producing a whole series of signifiers. Derrida clarifies the significance of this in *Of Grammatology*:

Through this sequence of supplements a necessity is announced: that of an infinite chain, ineluctably multiplying the supplementary mediations that produce the sense of the very thing they defer: the mirage of the thing itself, of immediate presence.<sup>555</sup>

The chain of supplements reveals that the discourse never rests on *a* subject, *an* entity that will answer to the question ‘who’, that will accept responsibility. It shows that the discourse is made up of a chain of substitutive and supplementary signifiers *with no signified* where it can settle as presence. And it does not rest because it *cannot*. There is no subjectivity ever simply present in British *or* EU foreign policy. Rather, both are marked by an absence of subjectivity which requires constant supplementation.

At the ‘origin’ of ethics and foreign policy is not the presence of a subject, a ‘we’, a ‘Britain’ or an ‘EU’ that is capable of accepting responsibility. Rather, “[t]he concept of origin or nature is nothing but the myth of addition”, the constant supplementation of an “originary *différance*”.<sup>556</sup> This is the *différance* then that itself has two significations. Firstly, it is that which gives *differences*: between a present subject and an absent object, between state success and state failure. Such differences are simply “effects of *différance*”.<sup>557</sup> Secondly, it is that which *defers*: “the action of putting off until later... a detour, a delay, a relay, a reserve, a representation”.<sup>558</sup> Each difference then, each supplementary addition of a new signifier (‘Blair’, ‘Britain’, ‘international community’

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<sup>553</sup> Blair, “Let the United Nations mean what it says and do what it means”.

<sup>554</sup> Tony Blair, Prime Minister’s Question Time, 25 January 2006.

<sup>555</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 157.

<sup>556</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167.

<sup>557</sup> Derrida, *Positions*, p. 9.

<sup>558</sup> Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, p. 8.



and so on) constitutes a moment of *deferral*, of delaying the presence of *the subject itself*.

This is not to suggest that the hierarchy has simply been inverted and that all deconstruction elucidates is the simple absence of the subject. Christina Howells criticises Derrida for precisely this, suggesting that his “conception of the subject seems uncannily stuck in what he himself might call the ‘reversal phase’”. Thus, it “appears closer to the *non*-subject of structuralist discourse than to a radically deconstructed subject”.<sup>559</sup> Yet the subject, as an effect of *différance*, can never be simply absent, just as it cannot be simply present either. Rather, as Williams says, “*différance* envelops the subject *before* itself, forever preventing and unsettling its attempts to *become* a subject”, and thus the moment of full presence or constitution “never quite arrives”.<sup>560</sup> The subject is not simply *object* or *non*-subject, rather, it never fully *is*. It is never fully either present or absent, subject or object, capable or incapable of taking responsibility *and yet both at the same time*. It is always a becoming object of the subject and a becoming subject of the object, or, as Williams more elegantly puts it, “[s]ubjectivity undergoes a perpetual play of (de)constitution or ‘constitutive loss of self.’”<sup>561</sup>

This section outlined the way in which subjectivity in EU, but mainly British, foreign policy has only ever made itself present as a chain of supplements. ‘Britain’ was supplemented by the ‘international community’, the latter with the ‘international coalition’, and so on. Never was any signification of subjectivity able to fully demonstrate its capacity to accept responsibility. This chain of signifiers revealed the lack of a signified, the lack of a subject capable of making itself *present*. Rather, presence is always deferred and subjectivity becomes explicable as a supplementary *différance*. What this demonstrates is that each body invested with subjectivity by the British and EU foreign policy text is at once capable and incapable of accepting their

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<sup>559</sup> Christina Howells, *Derrida: Deconstruction from Phenomenology to Ethics* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1998), p. 135.

<sup>560</sup> Williams, *Contemporary French Philosophy*, p. 133.

<sup>561</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.



responsibility, but never fully realisable as either. The subject of ethics and foreign policy is thus confirmed to be undecidable.

## *Conclusion*

This chapter has substantiated the extent to which the subject of ethics and foreign policy can never be made present, but will always remain undecidable. It has not sought to end all reference to subjectivity, nor liquidate it. Indeed, the importance of the subject to any possibility of ethics and foreign policy has been fully recognised. In response to a question from Richard Kearney about his apparent annihilation of the subject, Derrida replies that his critics need not worry:

I have never said the subject should be dispensed with. Only that it should be deconstructed. To deconstruct the subject does not mean to deny its existence. There are subjects, ‘operations’ or ‘effects’ of subjectivity. This is an incontrovertible fact. To acknowledge this does not mean, however, that the subject is what it *says* it is. The subject is not some meta-linguistic substance or identity, some pure *cogito* of self-presence; it is always inscribed in language. My work does not, therefore, destroy the subject; it simply tries to resituate it.<sup>562</sup>

This chapter has shown that the subject of British and EU foreign policy is not what it claims to be: the full presence of an agent capable of taking responsibility. Subjectivity has been resituated, revealed to be never simply present nor absent, but rather both and neither at the same time. There are still effects of subjectivity, as we shall see in the following two chapters – effects which produce claims to responsibility and hospitality. The subject is, as Derrida says elsewhere, “a ‘who’ besieged by the problematic of the trace and of *différance*, of affirmation, of the signature and of the so-called ‘proper’ name”.<sup>563</sup>

The deconstructive resituation of the subject undertaken in this chapter began, in section one, with a commentary on the constitution of subjectivity in British and EU foreign

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<sup>562</sup> Derrida, “Dialogue with Jacques Derrida”, p. 125.

<sup>563</sup> Derrida “‘Eating Well’ or the Calculation of the Subject”, p. 100.



policy. This subject of ethics and foreign policy is constructed as that which is capable of taking responsibility in world politics. Section two, however, illustrated how British foreign policy especially represented this subject as a state which is *succeeding* rather than *failing*. The predicates of success and failure were then turned against the subjectivity of 'Britain' through a parallel reading of Straw's conception of failing states as diseased, and Derrida's analysis of the autoimmunity of democracy. This illuminated the fact that, by the British text's own description, British subjectivity failed on 7/7, and subsequently could not fail to continue this constitutive failure.

The success of Britain as a subject was called into question by its inability to protect its citizens' human rights from its *self* (indeed, the very possibility of a self was problematised), and the subsequent restrictions on human rights exemplified by the killing of Jean Charles de Menezes. 'Britain's' construction of subjectivity and the successful subject was shown to be always inhabited by failure and the object – that which is incapable of taking responsibility. The subject of ethics and foreign policy is thus riven with undecidability.

Section three concentrated on the way in which the affirmed subject, that which answers to the question 'who?', is always shifting in British and EU foreign policy. At different points in the text, a different subject is affirmed. This constant movement illustrated the impossibility of the subject, the impossibility of the complete capacity to take responsibility. The constitutive absence of this capability required the constant supplementation of the 'subject' with a greater, more present, subjectivity. The inability of this chain of supplementary significations for the subject to ever rest upon the thing itself – the responsible subject – illustrated the fact that subjectivity is always an undecidable effect of *différance*: never fully present or absent, yet both at the same time.

This resituation of the subject – that which is capable of taking responsibility – reveals that subjectivity is always plagued by the problems of its trace, its *différential production*. That which performs ethics and foreign policy can only ever be both capable and incapable of such enactment. The possibility of ethics and foreign policy itself is



thus thrown into undecidability. However, this leaves us in the position of examining the *effects* of this resituated subjectivity for ethics and foreign policy. The effects are, primarily, a matter of *enacting* responsibility in British and EU foreign policy.



## *Chapter IV*

### *Responsibility: Protecting and Saving*

#### *Introduction*

The previous chapter revealed something of the centrality and yet deeply problematic nature of responsibility. A close reading of the texts of British and EU foreign policy illustrated that both rely on the capacity for responsibility as the way they construct the subject and, for Britain, membership of the international community. Within this representation, British foreign policy describes ‘Britain’ as a leading subject in the taking of responsibility. What was deconstructed in the last chapter was therefore this possibility of subjectivity in ethics and foreign policy *as the capacity to take responsibility*. It was not responsibility *per se*, but rather one aspect of it: the *taking of responsibility*, the possibility of taking responsibility.

This chapter moves from the *taking* of responsibility, to the *being* responsible or, rather, the *enactment* of responsibility. These two aspects of responsibility are not wholly separable, but the separation can be maintained for heuristic reasons. Both this and the following chapter firstly outline how British and EU foreign policy conceive their own ethicality, how they enact their own responsibilities, variously conceived. The question these chapters seek to answer is: how do Britain and the EU represent their foreign policies *as* responsible and/or ethical? It is established that the EU text generally conceives of its ethical foreign policy in terms of a territorialized responsibility of proximity: they are responsible to those closest to ‘Europe’. The basic way this responsibility is envisaged is as *hospitality*. The welcoming of states into the EU is seen as its most successful and ethical foreign policy. Thus EU foreign policy will largely be examined in Chapter V, on hospitality.



In contrast, due to the structure of the international community set up by British foreign policy, this chapter examines how ethics in British foreign policy is constructed around two issues of responsibility. These are, firstly, the *responsibility to protect*. Particularly from 1999-2004, this was the primary way in which responsibility was represented in British foreign policy; a responsibility to protect human life, regardless of location. They concentrate especially on the 2003 invasion of Iraq, demonstrating that this is at once *marginal* to other such interventions (in Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan) and yet also *central* to their understanding. The second issue of responsibility is a *responsibility to save*. Particularly in 2005, but stretching back to 2001 and up to 2006, the issue of 'Africa' is given primacy. This discourse represents Britain's policies in Africa as the consensual intervention in 'African' states to prevent human suffering. This policy is a matter of saving both human life (from AIDS, poverty, oppression) *and* states (from failure).

The distinction between the two responsibilities is essentially one of human agency. People need *protecting* from others' agency (e.g. Milosevic's); people and states need *saving* from others negligence (e.g. corrupt African government's). Britain's ethical responsibility does not extend to disasters which involve no agency: 'acts of God' such as the Asian Tsunami of December 2004. In Blair's first press conference after the Tsunami, he makes it quite clear that it will not take his attention away from Africa, "[t]he Tsunami is not a political issue... Africa is a political issue, that is an issue of real political leadership."<sup>564</sup>

The analysis then turns to demonstrating a deconstruction of the discourse of ethical responsibility in British foreign policy. This involves both phases of overturning (showing that such responsibility is truly irresponsible, its ethics unethical) and displacement. The displacements illustrate the undecidability of responsibility, both founding and undermining the very heart of the British foreign policy text. The problematic of ir-responsibility attests to *both* the possibility and impossibility of ethics and foreign policy. The chapter proceeds in three sections. The second and third outline

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<sup>564</sup> Tony Blair, PM Press Conference, 6 January 2005.



and then deconstruct the responsibility to protect and save. Firstly, however, it is necessary to explore the construction of responsibility in British foreign policy, the way it answers the question ‘why act responsibly?’

### *Responsibility in British Foreign Policy: Why Act Responsibly?*

What has not been explicitly considered thus far in this thesis is where responsibility comes from. How does post-1997 ‘Britain’ represent itself as being obliged to act ‘ethically’? What is the ethical foundation of the foreign policy, its guiding principle? Britain’s responsibility appears to come from two sources, one of which emerges as the basis for the other. Firstly, though this is often taken for granted, it is the prevention of human suffering which forms the ethical basis of British foreign policy. Cook’s May 1997 ‘Mission Statement’ declared that “[w]e are instant witness in our sitting rooms through the medium of television to human tragedy in distant lands, and are therefore obliged to accept moral responsibility for our response.”<sup>565</sup> It is the human tragedy (and the ‘witnessing’ of it) which provides the motivating force for our moral responsibility.

In his 2001 Party Conference speech, which Michael White described as the most powerful of his career,<sup>566</sup> Blair defended Britain’s intervention in Kosovo in similar terms. He continued by arguing that “if Rwanda happened again today as it did in 1993, when a million people were slaughtered in cold blood, we would have a moral duty to act there also”.<sup>567</sup> Jack Straw similarly argued that it was the “humanitarian catastrophe” in Kosovo which made “the British Prime Minister’s moral case for a military response unanswerable”.<sup>568</sup>

This is refined later in our time period, especially in relation to Africa. It is not simply death and humanitarian disasters which demand responsible, ethical foreign policies; it is

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<sup>565</sup> Cook, “Mission Statement”.

<sup>566</sup> Michael White, quoted in Anthony Seldon, *Blair* (London: Free Press, 1990), p. 499.

<sup>567</sup> Blair, Party Conference Speech 2001.

<sup>568</sup> Jack Straw, “Commitment to the Liberation and Future Prosperity of Iraq”, 1 April 2003.



*preventable* suffering and death. As Blair says in 2005, “it barely needs saying, but it cannot be morally right that so many people die when their deaths could be prevented”.<sup>569</sup> Kim Howells, a junior minister at the Foreign Office, makes a slightly different, if more traditional point, in justifying the concentration on Africa,

There is of course a clear moral reason for us to do so. How could there not be? In the decade beginning in 1994 it is estimated that in Africa alone, more than nine million people died as a result of conflict. That’s more than the number killed on all the horrific battlefields of the first world war. Moreover, the vast majority of the deaths in Africa were non-combatants – women and children struck down by disease and malnutrition.<sup>570</sup>

Both Blair and Howells emphasise the perfectly obvious nature of this moral basis (it “barely needs saying”, the moral reason is “clear”). But for Howells it seems to be that, by definition, the death of ‘non-combatants’ is *outrageous*, presumably because of their innocence. The implicit assumption is that only certain death and suffering ‘counts’ as a moral issue. Some deaths and suffering appear as *unavoidable* and so do not ‘count.’ But the intrinsic value of human life means that *preventable and outrageous* misery is morally repugnant. The prevention of preventable and outrageous loss of human life then is the seemingly unproblematic basis for a responsible, ethical foreign policy.

The second reason Britain acts responsibly has already been mentioned in Chapter III, and is clearly built on this underlying foundation. That is the DIC itself. Community, whether domestic or international, Blair tells us in his Global Ethics Foundation speech of 2000, is based on the “equal worth of all”.<sup>571</sup> If human life has intrinsic moral value, responsibility can have no territorial boundaries. Here we will see another difference as compared to the explicitly territorial and proximity based ethics of EU foreign policy.<sup>572</sup> As a member of an international community, a subject is responsible for protecting and

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<sup>569</sup> Tony Blair, Meeting with the Africa Commission in Rome, 27 May 2005.

<sup>570</sup> Kim Howells, “Why the UN Millennium Review Summit matters to the UK”, Speech to the IPPR, London, 7 September 2005.

<sup>571</sup> Blair, Speech to the Global Ethics Foundation.

<sup>572</sup> Although the justifications for the Kosovo intervention in 1999 are mixed up temporarily with a discourse on territory and proximity – see Chapter V: *Hospitality*.



saving life regardless of that life's location. This is further emphasised in the aforementioned Party Conference speech of 2001:

That is what community means, founded on the equal worth of all. The starving, the wretched, the dispossessed, the ignorant, those living in want and squalor from the deserts of Northern Africa to the slums of Gaza, to the mountain ranges of Afghanistan: they too are our cause.<sup>573</sup>

Thus, in setting out proposed guidelines for humanitarian intervention, Cook states that, “faced with an overwhelming humanitarian catastrophe” which a state is failing to prevent (or even seeks to promote, as in Kosovo), “the international community should intervene”.<sup>574</sup> As Straw observes in 2004, where a state's responsibilities are “manifestly ignored, neglected or abused, the international community may need to intervene: the cost of failing to do so in Rwanda or in Bosnia still haunts us today”.<sup>575</sup>

These two principles are the basis of how the ethics of responsibility are represented in British foreign policy. Firstly, human life is intrinsically morally valuable and it is therefore ethical to seek the prevention of *preventable* and *outrageous* death and suffering. This value is equal no matter where the life happens to be. Such equality gives the basis for the second principle: a logic of international community. International community means that where human life is being ill-treated, the rest of the community is morally obliged to prevent such ill-treatment.

The two main sections of this chapter examine the way such intervention is represented, and then deconstruct these representations. The first case explored is the *responsibility to protect* human life from aggressive forces within a state. In other words, this is a direct intervention in a state's affairs by military force in order to protect the lives of the state's citizens.<sup>576</sup> In terms of subjectivity, this means the responsibility to protect is enacted towards two types of international entities, both presented as failing state-subjects. This

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<sup>573</sup> Blair, Party Conference Speech 2001.

<sup>574</sup> Cook, “Guiding Humanitarian Intervention”.

<sup>575</sup> Straw, “Shaping a Stronger United Nations”.

<sup>576</sup> In this way perhaps Nicholas J. Wheeler's book could have more appropriately, though less alliteratively, been called *Protecting* rather than *Saving Strangers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).



could be, firstly, states conceived as objects, with no central control, security or guarantee of human rights over a territory. There are surprisingly few examples of an intervention represented in this way in post-1997 British foreign policy – only Sierra Leone and perhaps, at times, Afghanistan. The responsibility to protect is more commonly represented as the second category, being enacted towards the helpless objectified citizens of states as subjects-treated-as-objects (see Chapter III). These are subjects which, though *capable* of taking responsibility, *act as objects* in *refusing* to do so: Kosovo, Afghanistan (though this has elements of both) and Iraq.

The second responsibility examined in this chapter is generally enacted, by consent, in the affairs of other state-subjects. As subjects, these states are capable of responsibility and thus capable of giving consent. This *responsibility to save* human life is invariably invoked in relation to ‘Africa’ in British foreign policy. Such a responsibility to save has very much come to the fore since late 2004, with Britain holding the G8 chair and the EU Presidency, and is far less controversial than the stark interventions by force in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, both these representations of an ethical, responsible foreign policy will be shown to deconstruct, undermining their own claims to ethicality and responsibility.

### ***Responsibility to Protect***

This section, in the first instance, outlines the history of how a responsibility to protect came to be represented as a key enactment of the ethical in British foreign policy. It then examines how the various ‘humanitarian interventions’, such as those in Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan, fitted into this framework. Iraq, however, is shown to be the key intervention. While it was declared *marginal* to the responsibility to protect under the DIC, and therefore an exception in British foreign policy, the logic by which this marginality is expressed demonstrates its *centrality*. The way the morality of the invasion is represented is crucial to demonstrating how such a responsibility undermines itself. In this way the ‘responsibility to protect’, which constitutes the ‘ethical’ in British



foreign policy, is revealed as deconstructing under close examination. The ‘responsibility to protect’ will always already necessarily be an undecidable irresponsibility.

### *Development of the Responsibility to Protect*

Cook’s ‘Mission Statement’ reveals how Britain’s post-1997 ‘ethical dimension’ was represented early on as being concerned with human suffering. However, beyond this, there was remarkably little initial focus to the ‘ethical dimension’.<sup>577</sup> This is reflected in the literature: in *New Labour’s Foreign Policy: A New Moral Crusade?*, examining the first two years of Labour’s foreign policy, Richard Little and Mark Wickham-Jones collected chapters on a diverse range of subjects with little or no focal point – arms sales, human rights, Iran, the ‘Third Way’, Kashmir, internal Labour party politics, and so on.<sup>578</sup> It was only in 1999 that the elements of a ‘responsibility to protect’ began to emerge.

With civil war and ethnic cleansing once more breaking out in the Balkans, Blair took up the concept of ‘international community’ as a structure for a much more focused ethical/moral viewpoint. In his now famous DIC speech, Blair argued that the “most pressing foreign policy problem we face is to identify the circumstances in which we should get actively involved in other people’s conflicts”.<sup>579</sup> While the “principle of non-interference” is still important and still stands, it “must be qualified in important respects”. The most important qualification, he added, was that “[a]cts of genocide can never be a purely internal matter.”<sup>580</sup>

Though widely ignored by commentators, a more interventionist point was in fact made by Blair in a visit to South Africa a few months before the DIC speech. If a country is

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<sup>577</sup> A point also made by Wheeler and Dunne, “Good international citizenship: a third way for British foreign policy”, p. 848.

<sup>578</sup> Little and Wickham-Jones (eds.), *New Labour’s Foreign Policy*.

<sup>579</sup> Blair, “Doctrine of the International Community Speech”.

<sup>580</sup> *Ibid.*



attacking, or threatening to attack its neighbours, Blair argued in January 1999, “the international community has a responsibility to act”.<sup>581</sup> Such a responsibility to protect the lives of innocents could be performed in a variety of ways: through the UN, such as in Mozambique, or through regional bodies, such as the Nigerian-led ECOMOG troops in Sierra Leone. Crucially, however, he declares that “sometimes, if collective action cannot be agreed or taken in time, [the international community must act] through countries with a sense of global responsibility taking on the burden”.<sup>582</sup> Here Blair is not only calling for the international community to intervene to prevent human suffering, but for individual countries to do so. He underlines this by agreeing that while we cannot make ourselves the sole guardians of right and wrong, “when the international community agrees certain objectives and then fails to implement them, those who can act, must”.<sup>583</sup> Here we see Britain identifying itself as a leader of the international community, as illustrated in Chapter III.

From 1999 then, a key enactment of the Britain’s ethical dimension to foreign policy was considered to be this responsibility to protect. And Britain’s role of leadership in the area was crucial. Cook, in 2000, submitted a series of six guidelines on humanitarian intervention to the UN Secretary General.<sup>584</sup> He subsequently claimed in 2001 that Britain’s proposals to help decide when the international community can intervene in a state’s affairs were rejected by others in the UN, suspicious of greater intervention.<sup>585</sup> In September 2000, however, the Canadian Government established the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) in response to Kofi Annan’s plea for an agreed approach and principles to ‘humanitarian intervention’.<sup>586</sup> The subsequent ICISS report suggested moving from the language of ‘humanitarian intervention’ and the ‘right to intervene’ towards that of a ‘responsibility to protect’.<sup>587</sup>

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<sup>581</sup> Blair, “Facing the Modern Challenge”.

<sup>582</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>583</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>584</sup> Cook, “Guiding Humanitarian Intervention”.

<sup>585</sup> Robin Cook, “Human Rights – A Priority of Britain’s Foreign Policy”, 28 March 2001.

<sup>586</sup> *The Responsibility To Protect: Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001), p. VII.

<sup>587</sup> *Ibid.*, p.11.



Several recommendations along these lines were made to the UN General Assembly, Security Council and Secretary General.<sup>588</sup>

It was via this intertextual route that, by 2005, the specific phrase, a ‘Responsibility to Protect’ is incorporated into the British foreign policy text. In welcoming the Secretary General’s range of suggestions for the reform of the UN (arising partly from the ICISS report) on behalf of the British Government, Bill Rammell hailed Annan’s “boldest recommendation” as the suggestion that all governments share this responsibility to protect the citizens of other states.<sup>589</sup> Similarly, Straw argues that while several decisions taken by the General Assembly, following Annan’s recommendations, would make the UN more effective,

I believe that it will be the agreement on our Responsibility to Protect that will be seen in the future as the decision of greatest significance. If we follow through with that Responsibility to Protect, then never again will genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity be allowed to take place under our noses with nothing done. The Responsibility to Protect is, of course, a reflection of our common morality. But it is also a recognition that the world in which we now live is too small for us to be unaffected by or indifferent to the innocent victims of murder and oppression.<sup>590</sup>

According to Straw, it should not be surprising that Britain is supporting such a policy in the UN, as they have been campaigning for such a responsibility for a long time. This specifically ties such a responsibility up with the rules of the international community stated previously. By March 2006, this concept of a ‘responsibility to protect’ is so thoroughly entangled with the British discourse that the agreement on such a policy is seen as merely part of the development of Britain’s foreign policy. Straw argues that the Labour government’s values are

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<sup>588</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75.

<sup>589</sup> Bill Rammell, “Towards the Summit: The Path to Larger Freedom”, UKMis, New York, 22 March 2005.

<sup>590</sup> Jack Straw, “Our Changed and Changing World”, Speech at the 2005 World Summit, New York, 17 September 2005.



... the reason behind our determination to see a clear recognition that we have a ‘Responsibility to Protect’ all the world’s citizens from genocide and crimes against humanity; and that there is a collective responsibility to act where states fail to fulfil this essential task.<sup>591</sup>

What Blair had described as the “most pressing foreign policy problem”<sup>592</sup> faced in 1999 was largely resolved by 2006, and with Britain’s help and leadership. An agreement in the UN on a ‘Responsibility to Protect’ was represented as the achievement of what Britain had been pressing for: an agreement that there is a responsibility to intervene by force to protect humans from suffering. Yet British foreign policy, as seen in Blair’s 1999 South Africa speech, is still represented as *more* ethical than that of others’. To repeat an earlier quotation, he states that “if collective action cannot be agreed or taken in time” this responsibility must still be enacted “through countries with a sense of global responsibility taking on the burden”.<sup>593</sup> As will now be highlighted, it has very often been Britain that has shown this ethical “sense” of a global responsibility to protect.

### *Britain’s Ethical Leadership: Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan*

Since 1997, Britain has engaged in a significant number of forceful interventions. Indeed, Kampfner in 2003 suggested the debatable statistic of five wars in six years (the bombing of Iraq (1998), Kosovo (1999), Sierra Leone (2000), Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003)) to be “without precedent in modern British political history and without parallel internationally”.<sup>594</sup> It is certainly the case, however, that three of these ‘interventions’ were represented as ‘humanitarian’, part of Britain’s leadership as a nation with the sense of a global ‘responsibility to protect’. In other words, these interventions were represented as fitting within the framework of an ethical, responsible foreign policy – the DIC. A brief outline is offered of how interventions in Kosovo,

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<sup>591</sup> Jack Straw, “Active Diplomacy For A Changing World”, Launch FCO White Paper on International Strategic Priorities, FCO Leadership Conference 2006, 28 March 2006.

<sup>592</sup> Blair, “Doctrine of the International Community Speech”.

<sup>593</sup> Blair, “Facing the Modern Challenge”.

<sup>594</sup> Kampfner, *Blair’s Wars*, p. 385.



Sierra Leone and Afghanistan were described as an enactment of an ethical framework, and more specifically of a responsibility to protect. It was not denied that there were other reasons for these interventions, but the responsibility to protect provided the *ethical* justification.

Blair's DIC speech set out a redescription of British foreign policy, but more immediately commentators saw it as a justification of the intervention in Kosovo and an attempt to compel Bill Clinton to use ground troops.<sup>595</sup> To this end, Blair talks about the "unspeakable crimes" taking place, the "tear stained faces" of refugees with "heart-rending tales of cruelty".<sup>596</sup> For these reasons, "[w]e cannot let the evil of ethnic cleansing stand. We must not rest until it is reversed."<sup>597</sup> In a speech to the Muslim Council of Britain, Blair emphasises this even more strongly. He described meeting the Muslim refugees, "victims of a terrible crime", in Macedonia as "one of the most disturbing, shocking few hours of my life".<sup>598</sup> These people, he says, "are the reason for our military action," and "no civilised country could stand by and watch such brutality without acting".<sup>599</sup> The intervention was represented as an enactment of Britain's responsibility to protect the people of Kosovo. Their suffering is literally the reason for Britain's action.

Other reasons were of course given for the intervention in Kosovo. The most prominent among them was, as Cook put it, the credibility of NATO. "What credibility would NATO be left with if we allowed that [Rambouillet] agreement to be trampled on comprehensively by President Milosevic and did not stir to stop him?"<sup>600</sup> This is further emphasised by Blair who claimed that NATO's credibility is under threat in Kosovo; "[o]n its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday NATO must prevail... If NATO fails in Kosovo, the next dictator

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<sup>595</sup> For example, see: Kampfner, *Blair's Wars*, pp. 48-53; Andrew Rawnsley, *Servants of the People: The Inside Story of New Labour*, Revised Edition (London: Penguin, 2001), pp. 270-272; Peter Riddell, *Hug Them Close: Blair, Clinton, Bush and the 'Special Relationship'* (London: Politico's, 2004), pp. 101-103; Seldon, *Blair*, pp. 396-398.

<sup>596</sup> Blair, "Doctrine of the International Community Speech".

<sup>597</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>598</sup> Tony Blair, "Speech to the Muslim Council of Britain". 5 May 1999.

<sup>599</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>600</sup> Robin Cook, "Kosovo and the Modern Europe", 14 April 1999.



to be threatened with military force may well not believe our resolve to carry the threat through.”<sup>601</sup> Nonetheless, the need for NATO to succeed is still brought back to human suffering. As Cook said, it is “for our own sake but also for the sake of the refugees”,<sup>602</sup> while Blair stated that NATO must make the victory of justice over evil “a reality for Kosovo’s long-suffering people”.<sup>603</sup>

The intervention in Sierra Leone, in May 2000, was described as a forceful intervention to prevent another Rwandan style genocide and maintain peace.<sup>604</sup> It was a limited action and was not justified in any way other than the responsibility to protect Sierra Leonian citizens. Kampfner quotes Blair as reacting angrily to suggestions that it was a neo-imperialist war; “[w]hen people say ‘run an ethical foreign policy’, I say Sierra Leone was an example of that, not an example of not doing it. It is up in the high ground.”<sup>605</sup> Blair justified the action as an attempt “to do what we can to save African nations from barbarism and dictatorship,” thus he says, we can “be proud of it”.<sup>606</sup> Britain, once again, is represented as taking a leading role in the international community, exercising its sense of a global responsibility to protect in the absence of collective action.

Afghanistan is a more complicated case than either Kosovo or Sierra Leone. The primary reason presented for the invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001 was the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre on 9/11. Afghanistan, and its Taliban regime, was said to be harbouring Osama Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda terrorist training camps. The Taliban refused, in Britain’s representation, to comply with the will of the international community and hand Bin Laden over to the allied forces. Therefore, said Blair, “our enemy’s friend becomes our enemy too... in choosing to help the friends of terror, they are choosing to be enemies of ours”.<sup>607</sup> Yet, the humanitarian element of the intervention to overthrow the Taliban in Afghanistan was also very much to the fore. Not only had the Taliban chosen to side with terrorism, this extremist regime had made the Afghan

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<sup>601</sup> Blair, “Doctrine of the International Community Speech”.

<sup>602</sup> Cook, “Kosovo and the Modern Europe”.

<sup>603</sup> Tony Blair, Statement to Parliament on the NATO Summit in Washington, 26 April 1999.

<sup>604</sup> Mike O’Brien, “Morality in Asymmetric War and Intervention Operations”, 19 September 2002.

<sup>605</sup> Tony Blair, quoted in Kampfner, *Blair’s Wars*, p. 69.

<sup>606</sup> Blair, Mansion House Speech.

<sup>607</sup> Tony Blair, Statement at 10 Downing Street, 25 September 2001.



people suffer for years. It is “a regime without respect or justice for its own people... They care little for human life.”<sup>608</sup> In contrast Blair observed that “we do care about the humanitarian plight of people in Afghanistan”.<sup>609</sup>

This responsibility to protect the Afghan people was at times emphasised so strongly as to appear the fundamental reason for the action in Afghanistan. Blair states that Britain is not fighting the Afghan people, “[t]hey are victims of the Taliban regime. They live in poverty, repressed viciously, women denied the most basic human rights and subject to a crude form of theocratic dictatorship that is as cruel as it is arbitrary.”<sup>610</sup> He ties the action in directly with the more explicitly humanitarian action in Kosovo, comparing the Taliban exactly with the “hated regime” of Milosevic. “We acted against Milosevic because what he was doing... was unjust”,<sup>611</sup> similarly, Britain must lead the fight against injustice and human suffering in Afghanistan.

The representations of Britain’s foreign policy actions in Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan, while often having other motivations and justifications, are explicitly connected in the speeches of British foreign policy makers. The link is that Britain as a leading member of the international community, and a prominent subject of international politics, has a responsibility to protect the innocent people of these nations. The connection with the invasion of Iraq is less obvious. Yet, as will be explained, while this intervention was declared to be an anomaly, breaking with Britain’s ethical framework and the DIC, it becomes the most prominent example of how such an ethical responsibility to protect undermines itself.

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<sup>608</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>609</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>610</sup> Tony Blair, Statement to the House of Commons, 8 October 2001.

<sup>611</sup> *Ibid.*



### *Iraq: Exemplary Anomaly*

The invasion of Iraq in March 2003 was declared by the British foreign policy establishment to be a matter of the enforcement of UN resolutions on Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Blair explicitly stated that the “United Nations Mandate on Weapons of Mass Destruction” was the “reason we act”.<sup>612</sup> He emphasised that the aim of the invasion was never regime change, but rather the disarmament of WMD. Justifying the war in October 2004, after it had emerged that there probably were not any WMD present at the time of invasion, Straw claims that Iraq’s breaking of UN resolutions, and its refusal to *demonstrate* that it had no WMD, provided the legitimate reason for the invasion.<sup>613</sup> We can see that in the British government’s representation, the reason for the invasion was not the same as in Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan. The invasion was largely presented as a legal matter: the enforcement of international law and the will of the international community.

A fascinating speech in July 2004, gives an overview of Blair’s thinking on international affairs; to “attempt an explanation of how my own thinking, as a political leader, has evolved” over the past few years.<sup>614</sup> Directly linking his keynote speeches from 1999 onwards (such as that on the DIC and his 2001 Conference speech), Blair states that Iraq was anomalous to his ethical framework of international community. He notes that ‘humanitarian intervention’ has been gaining currency and that he had tried to set this out in his DIC speech.

So, for me, before September 11<sup>th</sup>, I was already reaching for a different philosophy of international relations from a traditional one that has held sway since the treaty of Westphalia in 1648; namely that a country’s internal affairs are for it and you don’t interfere unless it threatens you, or breaches a treaty, or triggers an obligation of alliance. *I did not consider Iraq fitted into this philosophy*, though I could see the horrible injustice done to its people by Saddam.<sup>615</sup>

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<sup>612</sup> Tony Blair, Press Conference on Iraq, 25 March 2003.

<sup>613</sup> Jack Straw, Iraq Statement, 12 October 2004.

<sup>614</sup> Blair, Speech on the threat of global terrorism.

<sup>615</sup> *Ibid.* – emphasis added.



The invasion of Iraq did not fit into his DIC, it did not fall within the remit of Britain's responsibility to protect human life. The difference between the intervention in Iraq and that of the three other examples cited is also represented by Blair in the difficulty of the decision it involved. He draws direct parallels in his speech: "Kosovo, with ethnic cleansing of ethnic Albanians, was not a hard decision for most people; nor was Afghanistan after the shock of September 11; nor was Sierra Leone. Iraq in March 2003 was an immensely difficult judgement."<sup>616</sup> This is underlined during an interview with Channel 4 News, three months later, with Blair observing that the Iraq decision was difficult, while "I felt that Kosovo was an open and shut case, I felt that Afghanistan in a sense with the Taliban was."<sup>617</sup>

However, despite these differences, Blair crucially brings the invasion of Iraq *back into* the DIC and the responsibility to protect. And this is done in the same speech. In justifying Britain's action he comes close to acknowledging that an intervention such as that in Iraq may be illegal under international law, but questions whether this should be the case. Using the rhetoric of rights and responsibilities, he argues that the DIC is no longer a vision of idealism.

The essence of community is common rights and responsibilities. We have obligations in relation to each other. If we are threatened, we have a right to act. And we do not accept in a community that others have a right to oppress and brutalise their people. We value the freedom and dignity of the human race and each individual in it... Emphatically I am not saying that every situation leads to military action. But we surely have a duty to act when a nation's people are subjected to a regime such as Saddam's.<sup>618</sup>

The decision on going to war with Iraq is thus brought back to the question of community and whether "in a community *others have a right to oppress and brutalise their people*". This means that we have a "duty to act when a nation's people are subjected to a regime such as Saddam's". He continues by tying this up with the issue of human rights, the protection of which, as we have seen in the previous chapter, is the

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<sup>616</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>617</sup> Blair, Interview with Channel 4 in Istanbul.

<sup>618</sup> Blair, Speech on the threat of global terrorism.



ultimate responsibility of any state as a subject in international politics.<sup>619</sup> “The UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights is a fine document”, declares Blair, “[b]ut it is strange that the United Nations is so reluctant to enforce them.”<sup>620</sup> Thus, in one speech, despite *declaring* Iraq to be different to Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan, he effectively *describes* their sameness, their identical nature.

Crucially, this identity is described in other speeches, especially by Foreign Secretary Jack Straw. Using Kosovo as the main comparison, Straw observes that “[a]s the humanitarian catastrophe was relayed live on our screens, the British Prime Minister’s moral case for a military response became unanswerable.”<sup>621</sup> The difference between Kosovo and Iraq, however, was not that there was a humanitarian catastrophe in one and not the other, but simply that in Iraq the catastrophe was not *visible*. Saddam has “conducted his reign of terror off camera. So unlike Kosovo, Iraq has not pricked the world conscience through our television screens.”<sup>622</sup> Yet the comparison with Kosovo remains. Straw acknowledges that while there “are never exact parallels... I do remind my audience that many argued against military action in Kosovo. Who today would question the moral case for the Allied intervention which led to the fall of Milosevic?”<sup>623</sup>

The responsibility to protect, while at times declared irrelevant, remains crucial to the representation of the invasion of Iraq. As Straw says elsewhere, until his “long reign of terror is ended, Saddam Hussein will remain a scar on the conscience of the world, and a standing affront to the ideals which underpin the foreign policies of the UK, the United States and our European allies”.<sup>624</sup> The scar on the UK’s conscience is not caused by the legal reasons given for going to war, but because of the nature of Saddam Hussein’s regime, which, Blair says, “represents the very antithesis of all the values we stand for”.<sup>625</sup> Iraq is described with many of the same adjectives as were used in relation to

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<sup>619</sup> For example, Cook, “Human Rights into a New Century” and Rammell, “Why Human Rights Matter”.

<sup>620</sup> Blair, Speech on the threat of global terrorism.

<sup>621</sup> Jack Straw, “Iraq: A Challenge We Must Confront”, 11 February 2003.

<sup>622</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>623</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>624</sup> Straw, “Commitment to the Liberation and Future Prosperity of Iraq”.

<sup>625</sup> Tony Blair, Interview with NBC, 4 April 2002.



Milosevic's Serbia and the Taliban's Afghanistan: brutal, dictatorial,<sup>626</sup> barbarous,<sup>627</sup> evil,<sup>628</sup> depraved, cruel beyond comprehension and "without an ounce of humanity".<sup>629</sup>

Blair and Straw clearly bring their representation of the war in Iraq *back into* the structure of the DIC and the responsibility to protect. However, it still remains anomalous, or rather, *marginal* to both. It is not *always* considered to be part of the DIC and can perhaps best be used as a liminal case to show the particular characteristics of those that are *central*, the easy, open and shut cases of a responsibility to protect: Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan. However, this very marginalisation of the Iraqi invasion is what makes it interesting to a deconstructive reading. Culler observes that a common operation of deconstruction is to take what is apparently marginal to a text, such as a footnote, and transfer it to a place of centrality. This is because "what has been relegated to the margins or set aside by previous interpreters may be important *precisely for those reasons that led it to be set aside*".<sup>630</sup>

In 'Signature Event Context', Derrida performs such a reading of Austin's speech act theory, focusing on the possibility of the *performative* utterance (where something is accomplished through speech itself – e.g. 'I now pronounce you man and wife' said by a vicar in a marriage ceremony). Austin is interested in what makes a *successful* performative utterance, one which *succeeds* in accomplishing an act – such as marrying a couple. To analyse successful performatives, he excludes from consideration the possibility that every performative utterance can be quoted or cited outside the correct context, for instance, in a play. If an actor playing a vicar quoted the performative, 'I pronounce you man and wife' when on stage, this would not be a serious performative. Therefore, Austin pushes the possibility of citation to the margins as *abnormal* and *parasitic*.<sup>631</sup>

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<sup>626</sup> Blair, Speech to the TUC Conference in Blackpool.

<sup>627</sup> Straw, "Reintegrating Iraq into the International Community – A cause with compelling moral force".

<sup>628</sup> Blair, Answering questions at MTV forum.

<sup>629</sup> Blair, Press Conference with President Bush at Camp David.

<sup>630</sup> Culler, *On Deconstruction*, p. 140 – emphasis added.

<sup>631</sup> Derrida, "Signature Event Context", pp.15-16.



However, as Derrida asks, is the citation that “Austin excludes as anomaly, exception” not “the determined modification of a general citationality – or rather, a general iterability – without which there would not even be a ‘successful’ performative?”<sup>632</sup> As demonstrated in Chapter II, language *must* have this general structure of iterability – the possibility for it to be repeated and transformed in different contexts – for it to be understandable. We must always be quoting, or citing; if we produced genuine “singular and original event-utterances”<sup>633</sup> we would be understood by no one, thus our performative utterance would be a *failure*. For *any* utterance to be a success it *must* be a citation. A vicar can only be successful in his performative because he is citing other vicars, and pronouncing words from within the iterable structure of language. In this way, Derrida takes what is *marginal* and makes it *central*, takes what is *anomalous* and makes it *exemplary*, while deconstructing the distinctions between these oppositions.

A similar operation can be performed with the question of Iraq and the responsibility to protect. If the invasion of Iraq is marginalised and treated as a liminal anomaly to this responsibility, we can ask precisely why this has been the case. What reasons are there for this marginalisation? It is suggested that the reason is precisely *the difficulty of the decision* emphasised above. The significance of this, as demonstrated below, is that the difficulty of the Iraq decision stands for each and every intervention enacted as a ‘responsibility to protect’. Rather than this difficulty marking it out as *simply* marginal to questions of ethics and foreign policy, it *also* marks its very centrality.

### *Iraq: Deconstructing the Ethics of a ‘Responsibility to Protect’*

In early 2003, the moral case for war became the dominant government narrative of the decision to invade Iraq. Nonetheless, as suggested above, the moral arguments, as a responsibility to protect, were always present within the government’s discourse. For example, in September 2002 Mike O’Brien, a junior minister at the Foreign Office, uses

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<sup>632</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>633</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.



Iraq as a fundamental issue in a speech on ‘Morality in Asymmetric Warfare and Intervention Operations’. Here, he ties together the legal and moral justifications for war as an over-arching ethical question. Firstly, he asks “[h]ow should we respond to Saddam’s state’s callous use of chemical weapons against his own people?” Secondly, how, he enquires, can we ignore “Saddam’s power-crazy determination to develop Weapons of Mass Destruction and to threaten the region and the international community...?” These two are tied together with O’Brien’s final question of underlying importance: “[e]ssentially, how should we deal with the threat posed by Saddam’s immorality?”<sup>634</sup>

Given that the responsibility to protect is represented as making an invasion of Iraq, and the removal of Saddam, necessary, why is the decision problematic? Crucially, because Iraq is represented as a *difficult* case (unlike Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan), we have open discussion of the crux of the problem in *all these interventions*. In a speech to the 2003 Labour Party Spring Conference, Blair makes his biggest pitch for the decision to go to war in Iraq being based on an ethical responsibility to protect. Here, we see why Iraq was represented as problematic as Blair recognises for the first time that those who oppose the war have a “moral purpose”.<sup>635</sup> But this does not mean that a decision to attack Iraq is immoral.

The moral case against war has a moral answer: it is the moral case for removing Saddam. It is not the reason we act. That must be according to the United Nations Mandate on Weapons of Mass Destruction. But it is the reason, frankly, why if we do have to act, we should do so with a clear conscience... This is a regime that contravenes every single principle or value anyone of our politics believes in... So if the result of peace is Saddam staying in power, not disarmed, then I tell you there are consequences paid in blood for that decision too. But these victims will never be seen. They will never feature on our TV screens or inspire millions to take to the streets. But they will exist nonetheless. Ridding the world of Saddam would be an act of humanity. It is leaving him there that is in truth inhumane.<sup>636</sup>

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<sup>634</sup> O’Brien, “Morality in Asymmetric War and Intervention Operations”.

<sup>635</sup> Blair, “Let the United Nations mean what it says and do what it means”.

<sup>636</sup> *Ibid.*



Thus, Iraq is morally problematic because there is morality *on both sides* of the argument. Nonetheless, the morality of the decision is different to the *reason for* the decision. As already shown, the *reason* for the decision was to enforce the UN's will on WMD. In his speech to the House of Commons opening the debate on Iraq Blair emphasised this, saying that he has "never put our justification for action as regime change... But it is the reason, I say frankly, why if we do act we should do so with a clear conscience and a strong heart."<sup>637</sup> Legality may supply the reason, but the ethical dimension to the decision arises from the responsibility we owe Iraqis. Just as there were other, not necessarily moral, reasons for invading Kosovo (the credibility of NATO) and Afghanistan (to prevent the operation of terrorist training camps), so WMD is *a* reason, *but not the only one*.

However, unlike in Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan, regarding Iraq it is acknowledged that there is an ethical argument for opposing the war. But where does this other morality come from? Crucially, it comes from the fact that an enactment of the responsibility to protect will inevitably mean that people are killed and injured. Acting responsibly and intervening to protect Iraqis will mean the death and injury of other Iraqis, as well as invading troops. Literally, invading will mean both protecting *and attacking* Iraqis. Straw sums this up best. He notes in 2003 that if Britain has to invade, "huge efforts will be made to ensure that the suffering of the Iraqi people is as limited as possible".<sup>638</sup> Nonetheless, he says, we find ourselves in an "eternal moral dilemma" due to the inevitable deaths of innocents.<sup>639</sup>

This eternal moral dilemma is brought about by the morality on both sides of the argument: that the responsibility to protect Iraqis inevitably is also a responsibility to *attack* and kill Iraqis. We are left to ponder why an eternal moral dilemma was absent from the representations of interventions in Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan; why there was no concern shown, especially for the deaths of Sierra Leonians. *People* who *die* as a result of the intervention simply do not exist in the Sierra Leone of British

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<sup>637</sup> Tony Blair, Statement to House of Commons opening Iraq debate, 18 March 2003.

<sup>638</sup> Straw, "Iraq: A Challenge We Must Confront".

<sup>639</sup> *Ibid.*



foreign policy. Yet the Iraqi example, while it was marginalised because it was a difficult decision, can now be seen as *central* precisely *because of* the difficulty of the decision. It reveals the moral dilemma which *must* exist for each invasion.

Derrida analyses a situation where there is precisely such a dual responsibility in *The Gift of Death*. Noting the deep connection between the concept of responsibility and religion,<sup>640</sup> Derrida turns to the figure of Abraham, who unites all three ‘religions of the book’ (Judaism, Christianity, Islam). In Genesis 22, God orders Abraham: “[t]ake your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about.” Abraham does this. Without asking any explanation from God he binds his son on the altar and “reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son”. At this point God steps in again, telling Abraham not to harm Isaac and that his faith was being tested.<sup>641</sup>

Questions of ethics and responsibility inevitably arise here. Did Abraham act responsibly? Did he make the responsible decision in being prepared to kill Isaac? The reason this story is both scandalous *and* revealing in relation to responsibility in British foreign policy is that there is, as with Britain in Iraq, morality on both sides of Abraham’s decision. Just like Blair and Straw, Abraham has *two* duties, not just one. If Abraham were only responsible to God, there would be no dilemma. Equally, if he only had a father’s responsibility to protect his son Isaac, there would be no issue. But Abraham is *absolutely* responsible to both imperatives: to his God, the absolutely Other, upon whom he relies completely, *but also* to Isaac and his family, who he had a duty to protect. He cannot act absolutely responsibly towards *both*. The story is “monstrous, outrageous, barely conceivable”, nothing could be worse “vis-à-vis love, humanity, the family, morality” *and yet* “isn’t this also the most common thing?” Isn’t it what the “most cursory examination of the concept of responsibility cannot fail to affirm?”<sup>642</sup> So

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<sup>640</sup> Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, translated by David Willis (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 2.

<sup>641</sup> Genesis 22: 2-12, *The Bible* (New International Version).

<sup>642</sup> Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, pp. 67-8.



what is the revelation about responsibility that is affirmed by this story? That responsibility is paradoxical and internally contradictory.

We can see the operation of this double moral claim, this dual responsibility, in the decision to invade Iraq (and with Iraq being exemplary, in *all* Britain's decisions to intervene). We can intervene to fulfil our 'responsibility to protect' certain others, but what about those who will be killed as a result of this intervention? What about our responsibility to protect them? But, if we act responsibly towards those others, what about those who we wanted to intervene to protect in the first place? Now we are acting irresponsibly towards them. For both Straw and Blair, despite its "eternal" nature, this moral dilemma is swiftly resolved. Straw argues that for "the sake of the Iraqi people... it is a challenge we must confront".<sup>643</sup> Similarly, Blair in the long quotation above begins with the pained acknowledgement that the ethics of the Iraqi invasion are not straightforward. The case can be made either way. Ethical responsibility is owed on both sides and "consequences paid in blood" will be incurred on both sides. Yet, shortly after this observation, Blair asserts that one side of the argument is humane and the other, in truth, inhumane.<sup>644</sup>

The problem is that, in the claim that there is morality on both sides of the debate on Iraq, a crucial observation is made about the problematic nature of ethical, responsible action. This observation then removes the very basis for Straw and Blair's resolution of that problem. The argument seems to be that an invasion will mean the death of US, UK and Iraqi soldiers and civilians. Causing such death and danger would be morally wrong. But, equally, if Iraq is not invaded and Saddam not removed, he will continue to suppress and brutalise his people, WMD may be used by Iraq to destabilise the region, or given to terrorists to attack Western democracies. Meanwhile for the Iraqi people, "the darkness will close back over them again; and he [Saddam] will be free to take his revenge upon those who must wish him gone".<sup>645</sup> This too would be morally wrong (and

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<sup>643</sup> Straw, "Iraq: A Challenge We Must Confront".

<sup>644</sup> Blair, "Let the United Nations mean what it says and do what it means".

<sup>645</sup> *Ibid.*



has “consequences paid in blood”). But if both are morally wrong, no straightforward moral resolution is possible. There can be no straightforward ‘responsibility to protect’.

For Blair and Straw, the “eternal moral dilemma” is, as has been shown, easily (and miraculously?) resolved. But this resolution cannot be of the order of responsibility, morality, or ethics. As Derrida observes,

I cannot respond to the call, the request, the obligation, or even the love of another without sacrificing the other other, the other others. *Every other (one) is every (bit) other [tout autre est tout autre]*, every one else is completely or wholly other. The simple concepts of alterity and of singularity constitute the concept of duty as much as that of responsibility. As a result, the concepts of responsibility, of decision, or of duty, are condemned a priori to paradox, scandal, and aporia.<sup>646</sup>

If “[e]very other (one) is every (bit) other” then there can be no reason for, as Straw and Blair do, resolving the dilemma in favour of one other or the other other. Any such resolution is problematic and therefore any such assertion of a ‘responsibility to protect’ is, as Derrida observes, “condemned a priori to paradox, scandal and aporia”.<sup>647</sup> This is precisely what makes the decision, as Straw himself affirms, an *eternal* moral dilemma. The moral of both stories (Abraham and Issac and the invasion of Iraq) is morality itself: that morality must always be sacrificed to morality, responsibility to one other (Iraqi soldiers and civilians) must be sacrificed to our responsibility to other others (Western civilians, Iraqi dissidents and the Middle East region), ethical duty sacrificed to ethical duty. “One must behave not only in an ethical or responsible manner, but in a nonethical, nonresponsible manner.”<sup>648</sup>

The crucial aspect of showing that the Iraq invasion is central to the responsibility to protect is that, unlike the other examples, the eternal moral dilemma is acknowledged as problematic. Previous interventions are represented as clear-cut, obvious, easy decisions. Yet, in fact, according to the British government’s own reasoning, there is morality on

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<sup>646</sup> Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, p. 68.

<sup>647</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>648</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.



both sides of each such decision. This illuminates the morality of responsibility, the *responsibility* of responsibility, as inherently undecidable. This section exposed how the ethics involved in the representation of each intervention, Kosovo, Sierra Leone *and* Iraq comes down to the fact that under the DIC Britain has an ethical responsibility to protect. It has then demonstrated how the acknowledgement of two moralities, two responsibilities, means any ‘responsibility to protect’ will also be an irresponsibility, its morality will always be an undecidable im-morality. The next section turns to look at the second enactment of responsibility in British foreign policy which emerged strongly in Labour’s second and third term foreign policy.

### *Responsibility to Save*

In November 2000, Blair hinted that Sierra Leone was also an example of a different type of responsibility in British foreign policy. He suggested that Britain must “intervene, not excessively, but to do what we can to save African nations from barbarism and dictatorship and be proud of it”.<sup>649</sup> This section argues that such a ‘responsibility to save’ forms the second aspect of the way the British foreign policy text constructs its ethical dimension. The reference to ‘African’ nations, it is argued, is not coincidental, but integral to this responsibility.

Firstly, this section demonstrates the prominent emphasis on ‘moral’ and ethical aspects of this responsibility to save Africa. While ‘humanitarian intervention’ may have been *the* moral question of 1999-2003, the discourse shifts in 2004 to a focus on saving Africa as the major concern. Secondly, a description is given of how this ‘responsibility to save’ has developed within the foreign policy text, how it is represented in the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and the Commission for Africa (CA), how it meshes with wider aspects of subjectivity/objectivity, rights and responsibilities and the DIC. Thirdly, the section illustrates the deconstruction of the responsibility to save. Whilst there is a declaration of partnership and responsibility, the effective

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<sup>649</sup> Blair, Mansion House Speech.



supplementation of the NEPAD with Blair's CA shows an entrenchment of the subject-object relation morally questioned by the British foreign policy discourse itself. Finally, how the responsibility to save, like the responsibility to protect, is irresolvably caught up in ethical contradiction is explicated.

*The Morality of the Cause: a Responsibility to Save 'Africa'*

Blair's 2001 Party conference speech was described by political journalist Peter Riddell as highly "moralistic", even "messianic".<sup>650</sup> Michael White suggested that its "sweep and moral fervour caught friend and foe off guard".<sup>651</sup> In the most widely quoted section, Blair calls for the international community to act against the "starving, the wretched, the dispossessed, the ignorant, those living in want and squalor" from Africa, to Gaza to Afghanistan.

This is a moment to seize. The kaleidoscope has been shaken. The pieces are in flux. Soon they will settle again. Before they do, let us re-order this world around us. Today, humankind has the science and technology to destroy itself or to provide prosperity to all. Yet science can't make that choice for us. Only the moral power of a world acting as a community can.<sup>652</sup>

There is a responsibility to save and protect everyone, and this constitutes the "moral power" of the world "acting as a community". However, in an earlier section of the speech Blair called specific attention to Africa, using the famous lines: "[t]he state of Africa is a scar on the conscience of the world. But if the world as a community focused on it, we could heal it. And if we don't, it will become deeper and angrier."<sup>653</sup> Here the responsibility to save is a responsibility to heal, and the focus on Africa is clarified. As Blair claims in 2002, "[i]f Africa is a scar on the conscience of our world, the world has a duty to heal it, heal it we can and we must..."<sup>654</sup>

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<sup>650</sup> Riddell, *Hug Them Close*, p. 165.

<sup>651</sup> Michael White, quoted in Seldon, *Blair*, p. 499.

<sup>652</sup> Blair, Party Conference Speech 2001.

<sup>653</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>654</sup> Blair, Speech to WSSD in South Africa.



2001 was not the beginning of the selection of Africa as a moral issue. As with so many concerns in British foreign policy post-1997, Cook emphasised the issue long before Blair.<sup>655</sup> Similarly, Peter Hain during his time as a Junior Minister in the Foreign Office, called supporting Africa “a moral imperative” in 1999.<sup>656</sup> Both Cook and Hain were suggesting that it was “not only” a moral imperative, but also a matter of self interest, a theme Blair adopted emphatically. Regardless of these precursors, it was only in late 2004, and especially 2005, that British foreign policy began a concerted effort at presenting ‘Africa’ as a, or rather *the*, moral/ethical issue. There are several possible reasons for this shift in ‘ethical’ priorities: it could be seen as an effort to shift attention from the increasingly unpopular occupation of Iraq to a *relatively* uncontroversial ‘ethical’ issue; it also coincided with Britain holding the chair of the G8 and the EU Presidency simultaneously. Thus, in December 2004, in a BBC Radio interview for World Aids Day, Blair acknowledged that there is self interest in the desire to help Africa, but “I also think it is a moral question”.<sup>657</sup>

In 2005, it became clear *how* Africa is presented as a moral/ethical issue in British foreign policy. In line with section one above, it is the *unnecessary* and *outrageous* death and suffering caused by *negligence* that marks it as such. Blair declares in a New Year’s day *Economist* article, “it can’t be morally right, in a world growing more prosperous and healthier by the year, that one in six African children still die before their fifth birthday...”<sup>658</sup> Comparing it to the Asian Tsunami, which happened just days before, Blair states that the difference is in the *preventability* of what is happening in Africa. Asked in a press conference whether it is a battle between good and evil in Africa, he replies that “it is evil that you have preventable death on such a scale in Africa... That is an evil and what would be good is to do something about it.”<sup>659</sup> It is crucial then that, unlike the natural disaster in Asia, the death and suffering in Africa is preventable, and this is what makes it moral issue. This is presented as perfectly evident to anyone. As

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<sup>655</sup> Robin Cook, “Prosperity, Conflict Prevention and Democracy in Africa”, 24 September 1998.

<sup>656</sup> Peter Hain, “Angola Needs Our Help”, 20 November 1999.

<sup>657</sup> Tony Blair, BBC Radio Interview to mark World Aids Day, 1 December 2004.

<sup>658</sup> Tony Blair, PM’s article for *The Economist* on G8, 1 January 2005.

<sup>659</sup> Tony Blair, PM Press Conference, 6 January 2005.



Blair observes, “it barely needs saying, but it cannot be morally right that so many people die when their deaths could be prevented. That I think is obvious and we would all share that.”<sup>660</sup>

Straw reinforces this representation. Quoting statistics on the suffering of Africans and Africa’s economic regression, Straw claims “[t]hat situation is a moral affront to us all.”<sup>661</sup> Lord Triesman, the newly appointed Minister for Africa (as of May, 2005), claimed in the Tanzanian Parliament that “it is a moral imperative that the world act now” in relation to Africa.<sup>662</sup> Crucially, the responsibility to save Africa is not just presented as *a* moral cause, but as Blair says, there is “no doubt at all that the biggest moral course [*sic.*] is Africa in the world today”.<sup>663</sup> In 2006, “Africa is probably *the* great moral cause of our time.”<sup>664</sup> And why? “[B]ecause of the numbers of people who die, millions of people who die unnecessarily through conflict, or famine, or disease”.<sup>665</sup>

So, just as ‘responsibility to protect’ civilians was a moral issue, and the most important foreign policy question from 1999-2003, the ‘responsibility to save’ Africa is *the* great moral cause of the time, or, at least from late 2004 onwards, in British foreign policy. The development of the ‘responsibility to save’ is now examined, how it fits into Britain’s foreign policy framework of subjectivity/objectivity and the DIC. This will help frame the later deconstruction of Africa’s representation in the foreign policy text.

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<sup>660</sup> Tony Blair, Meeting with the Africa Commission in Rome, 27 May 2005.

<sup>661</sup> Jack Straw, “A Partnership for Wider Freedom”, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Washington DC, 18 May 2005.

<sup>662</sup> Lord Triesman, “Africa’s Instability is our Instability”, Tanzanian Parliament, 15 June 2005.

<sup>663</sup> Tony Blair, PM’s interview with Downing Street website, 30 June 2005.

<sup>664</sup> Tony Blair, *Carte Blanche* Interview, South Africa, 11 February 2006.

<sup>665</sup> *Ibid.*



### *Development of the 'Responsibility to Save'*

New Labour's foreign policy towards Africa is represented as a departure from the old relationship. While, as stated above, the concentration on the 'responsibility to save' Africa may have been present in the British foreign policy discourse before 2002, the precise contours of this policy were not fully worked through. By 2002, the operative word, emphasised over and over again in the relationship to Africa, is *partnership*. And this is extremely significant. Blair chose a visit to Africa in February 2002 to set this out in relation to Britain's policy of supporting NEPAD, an African based initiative to promote African solutions to problems of underdevelopment, disease and poverty. Speaking to the Ghanaian Parliament, Blair talks about the need for partnership in development. He wants a "fundamental shift in our approach to aid", not "a hand-out but aid as a hand-up", not to,

...create dependence but to create sustainable independence, so that the relationship between the developed and the developing world is not one of donor and passive recipient but one of equal partners in building prosperity for all. This is aid as investment in our collective economic and political security.<sup>666</sup>

The problem with this old relationship appears to be that it aims to, or certainly has the effect of, creating dependence and passivity. In contrast, Blair's vision, through the support of NEPAD, is that of "globalisation driven by a global ethic".<sup>667</sup> Setting out his agenda for the G8, which Britain was chairing in 2005, Blair says that the "[t]he old donor/recipient relationship is patronising and unworkable."<sup>668</sup> Old enactments of the responsibility to save are condemned as patronising, unethical and immoral. The new partnership ethical drive is essentially one of treating Africa as "equal partners" to the "developed world".<sup>669</sup>

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<sup>666</sup> Tony Blair, Speech to Ghana's Parliament, 2 February 2002.

<sup>667</sup> Blair, "Partnership for African Development".

<sup>668</sup> Tony Blair, PM's Speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, 26 January 2005.

<sup>669</sup> *Ibid.*



The responsibility to save is also emphasised as enacting a relationship of equality and partnership in 2004, when Blair announced his CA. The CA emerges from what Blair calls, “the need to tackle the African problem as a whole”.<sup>670</sup> An initiative emerging from the British Government, Blair describes his CA in a speech to the African Union as a commission of seventeen people drawn from government, civil society and the business community in Africa and the developed world, to “produce a comprehensive plan” for Africa.<sup>671</sup> This plan, published in 2005, was to be focused on “how the international community can support African development in partnership together”. At the “core” of this plan then, is the “real partnership between Africa and the developed world.”<sup>672</sup> The comprehensive nature of this plan means that the subject of Africa is truly brought within the foreign policy remit, rather than just that of development. Blair observed in June 2005 that the purpose of the plan for Africa “is to try and put all the different aspects of the problem of Africa, not just that of aid and debt, but also that of governance and conflict to put all those items together in a comprehensive plan”.<sup>673</sup>

It is also through the concepts of equality and partnership that we can see how Britain’s representation of its ethical dimension to foreign policy, as a responsibility to save Africa, is drawn into the question of international community with its rights and responsibilities. Chapter III underlined that to be considered part of the international community one had to be capable of accepting one’s responsibility. While “[s]tates have the right to non-interference in their internal affairs”, the rights of a subject, “they also have responsibilities, towards their own people, and towards the international community and their international engagements”.<sup>674</sup> If a state ignores, neglects or is incapable of fulfilling these responsibilities, “the international community may need to intervene”.<sup>675</sup> Literally, to be treated as a subject of international affairs, and allowed the rights that go with that, one has to accept and deal with one’s responsibilities.

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<sup>670</sup> Tony Blair, Q&A session given by PM Tony Blair and President Jacques Chirac with French and British students in Paris, 9 May 2004.

<sup>671</sup> Tony Blair, Speech on Africa, 7 October 2004.

<sup>672</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>673</sup> Tony Blair, Press conference with the Italian Prime Minister in Rome, 1 June 2005.

<sup>674</sup> Straw, “Shaping a stronger United Nations”.

<sup>675</sup> *Ibid.*



In June 2002, Blair notes that this “partnership” also has the character of a “bargain”, it is not a hand-out but rather a “deal”. The responsibility of the developed world to support NEPAD financially is “dependent on African countries fulfilling their side of the bargain”.<sup>676</sup> Their side of the bargain is later outlined as an agreement to “a whole series of initiatives on the rule of law, on proper commercial and legal systems, on rooting out corruption, on respect for democratic rights, and the processes of democracy”.<sup>677</sup> This is similarly the case with the CA. In a joint press conference with George Bush in June 2005, Blair says that the African agenda is “not a something for nothing deal”, but rather a “two-way commitment” in which “we” require commitments on governance against corruption and favouring democracy and the rule of law.<sup>678</sup>

NEPAD and the CA, the entire ‘responsibility to save’ Africa, are all represented as part of the DIC. It is a foreign policy designed to fundamentally move the relationship between Africa and the developed world onto a basis of the rights and responsibilities of subjects, of *equal partners*. As such, it replaces an unethical policy with an ethical one. “Africa should not be seen as a victim but as a partner... This is about what we can do together, as equals, with mutual respect...”<sup>679</sup> The shift is represented as a movement from Africa as a patronised, dependent, passive and unequal victim; an object of British foreign policy; a group of failing states incapable of responsibility and thus subjectivity. Now it is treated as a partner, an equal, a *subject* capable of fulfilling its responsibilities and being active participants in the international community.

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<sup>676</sup> Tony Blair, Doorstep Interview at G8 Summit, 28 June 2002.

<sup>677</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>678</sup> Tony Blair, Tony Blair and George Bush joint press conference at the White House, 7 June 2005.

<sup>679</sup> Blair, “Partnership for African Development”.



### *Objectification of 'Africa': Supplementing Partnership*

Given the equality of the partnership espoused by British foreign policy, it may be surprising that the choice of a 'Responsibility to Save' was made for this section. Would not a 'responsibility to partnership', a 'responsibility to bargain' or a 'responsibility to equality' be more appropriate? These are perhaps more descriptively accurate as well as having the advantage of not implying inequality. After all, someone who needs saving literally *needs* the one who saves. And this is acknowledged by Blair, who, as observed above, dismisses the old relationship between Britain and Africa as passive, disrespectful, dependent and patronising.

There is an unexamined power relationship in operation here similar to that of Rosenau's 'penetrated political system'<sup>680</sup> discussed in Chapter I: she who *saves* is seen to have an abundance of something she who is *saved* lacks. If Britain, as Blair claims, "save[s] African nations from barbarism and dictatorship"<sup>681</sup> it is because Britain has abundance of what Sierra Leone lacks: well trained security forces, established rule of law, limited corruption, economic prosperity for instance. In fact, the subtitle of 'responsibility to save' *is* appropriate, and precisely for this reason. This section demonstrates that the responsibility enacted and espoused towards Africa shows specifically the unequal relationship which Britain is said to be avoiding with its 'new' partnership. Effectively 'Africa', while *declared* an equal subject, is essentially *described* as a passive, unequal, homogenous object of British foreign policy. This becomes a little clearer when examining precisely how the relationship between Britain's two main 'Africa' policies (NEPAD and CA) is represented.

So what is the relationship between Britain's support for NEPAD on the one hand, and the CA's comprehensive plan for Africa on the other? During a revealing interview with the South African magazine TV show, *Carte Blanche*, Blair is asked precisely this question. The interviewer notes that many people saw Britain's establishment of the CA

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<sup>680</sup> See Rosenau, "Pre-Theories and Theories of Foreign Policy".

<sup>681</sup> Blair, Mansion House Speech.



as “being quite arrogant because there was already a plan – called NEPAD – which was set up by Africans, for Africans”.<sup>682</sup> Why then, “the need for another plan, which was spear-headed by Britain?”<sup>683</sup> Blair replies by saying that NEPAD was *Africa’s* effort, while the CA was a *developed* nation’s comprehensive plan.

Well I don’t think people really thought it was arrogant, because I mean the NEPAD process, which I was also heavily involved in, and obviously President Mbeki was the main mover in it, the whole purpose of that was to see what Africa could do for its own development. But I think everybody recognises, and indeed this is how our conversation began, that the outside world also has a responsibility and obligation to act... So I think you need the combination of the developed and the developing world working together.<sup>684</sup>

The explanations given by junior ministers such as Ian Pearson and Lord Triesman (Minister for Africa) are even more revealing. While touting 2005 as the ‘Year for Africa’ in Japan, Junior Minister Ian Pearson argued that African governments “must take the lead in Africa’s development, and they are” through NEPAD.<sup>685</sup> This he describes as “their [progressive African leaders’] own blueprint for tackling the continent’s problems”.<sup>686</sup> However, the role of the CA is “that Africa can not [*sic.*] on its own achieve the take-off point in development. It needs our help – in terms of trade access, Overseas Development Aid, debt relief and investment...”<sup>687</sup> Lord Triesman repeats this, again in June 2005: “[t]he Commission argues – and we agree – that Africa cannot, on its own, achieve the take-off point in development.”<sup>688</sup>

In Derridean terms, we can see the CA operating here as a ‘supplement’ to NEPAD; the British plan supplementing the ‘African’. Derrida’s conception of the ‘supplement,’ as outlined in the previous two chapters, contains two meanings.<sup>689</sup> Firstly, it is an insignificant and inessential extra, a surplus to what was already complete in and of

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<sup>682</sup> Interviewer, *Carte Blanche* Interview, 11 February 2006.

<sup>683</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>684</sup> Blair, *Carte Blanche* Interview.

<sup>685</sup> Ian Pearson, “G8 2005: A Year For Africa”, Tokyo, 6 June 2005.

<sup>686</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>687</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>688</sup> Lord Triesman, “Africa’s Instability is our Instability”.

<sup>689</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 144.



itself. Thus, the CA is merely a surplus to NEPAD, an ultimately useless addition to the African plan (NEPAD) which was complete in and of itself. In 2002, Britain's foreign policy of supporting NEPAD, supporting progressive African leadership in finding solutions to 'Africa's' problems, was enough. It was fulfilling a responsibility to save by a genuine partnership.<sup>690</sup> It was sufficient to Africa's needs while being an ethical, non-patronising way of helping an equal. The addition in 2005 of the CA was unnecessary.

Secondly, however, the very possibility of this surplus suggests that that which is supplemented is incomplete. Otherwise the addition of a supplement is futile. But such a "supplement supplements. It adds only to replace. It intervenes or insinuates itself in-the-place-of."<sup>691</sup> Thus, at the very beginning of Blair's 'Year of Africa'<sup>692</sup> (2005), the support of NEPAD is no longer sufficient. In his New Year *Economist* article, Blair declares that "[t]ruly a *new* partnership is required."<sup>693</sup> The partnership involved in NEPAD, it seems, was not enough. This is why the CA was set up: to produce a *truly* comprehensive plan. As Blair observes, "we put together that comprehensive plan for Africa and it is the only thing that will give the continent a hope".<sup>694</sup> If the CA will produce a fully comprehensive plan four years after NEPAD, then NEPAD *must have been deficient*. It must have lacked something or been incomplete in some way. It was not enough for Africa to "achieve the take-off point" in development.<sup>695</sup> 'Africa' needed 'us' to bring hope in our comprehensive plan of true partnership. Quite literally the CA adds "only to replace" NEPAD. It replaces the deficient, lacking, incomplete African effort with British completeness, plenitude and abundance.

Derrida's reading of Rousseau in *Of Grammatology* makes the distinction between what Rousseau 'declares' (i.e. what he wishes to say) and what he 'describes' (i.e. what his discourse ends up saying, what effect it produces contrary to intention).<sup>696</sup> Thus, we can say that, as observed above, British foreign policy *declares* African nations to be

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<sup>690</sup> Blair, Speech to Ghana's Parliament, 2 February 2002.

<sup>691</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 145.

<sup>692</sup> Straw, "A Partnership for Wider Freedom".

<sup>693</sup> Blair, PM's article for *The Economist* on G8 – emphasis added.

<sup>694</sup> Blair, BBC Radio Interview to mark World Aids Day.

<sup>695</sup> Lord Triesman, "Africa's Instability is our Instability".

<sup>696</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 229.



subjects, to be “equals” in a “partnership”, capable of accepting their responsibilities as members of the international community. While this is *declared*, however, what is *described* works against this. Africa is *described*, is represented, as precisely the opposite, as an object, incapable of accepting responsibility, lacking a comprehensive plan, and incapable of coping alone. NEPAD requires supplementation by the CA. While British foreign policy declares a ‘responsibility to partnership’ between equals, a ‘bargain’ or a ‘deal’, it describes an unequal, patronizing and morally problematic ‘responsibility to save’.

Of course, to a certain extent we do not even need the logic of deconstructive supplementarity to reveal how British foreign policy makes ‘Africa’ into an object. ‘Africa’ is simply treated as an unproblematic, homogeneous lump from the beginning of the period of foreign policy under study. In all the speeches above it is not specific problematic nations of Africa (such as the Sudan and the DRC, for example), or even ‘certain African states’ that are being talked of, but simply ‘Africa’. Blair’s speech to the African Union announcing the CA is entitled ‘Speech on Africa’. ‘Asia’, ‘South America’, ‘North America,’ or other land masses, would never merit such an undifferentiated speech. At this point it would be possible to produce statistics which show how internally diverse Africa truly is, how there is no “problem of Africa” as Blair continually declares.<sup>697</sup> However, this is not the critique currently undertaken. Rather than bringing in other discourses, a close examination of the British foreign policy text illustrates how the discourse undermines itself.

Much more important, in this sense, is the way that Blair’s ‘Speech on Africa’ acknowledges the status of ‘Africa’ within British foreign policy. Declaring 2005 a year of decision for Africa, Blair argues that a comprehensive plan finally exists, having “at its core a real partnership between Africa and the developed world.”<sup>698</sup> The price of failure, he says, is immense. “The prize for success would be an Africa standing proud in

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<sup>697</sup> For example, Tony Blair, PM Press Conference, 6 January 2005, and Tony Blair, Press conference with the Italian Prime Minister in Rome, 1 June 2005.

<sup>698</sup> Blair, Speech on Africa.



its own right in the international community.”<sup>699</sup> The important thing to note is how this supports the earlier claims made about the logic of the supplement regarding NEPAD and the CA. The aim, the goal, the prize is Africa “standing proud in its own right in the international community” – implicitly, it currently cannot do so. ‘Africa’ (or certainly African nations) is either not considered part of the international community, because it cannot fulfill the responsibilities of a subject, or is seen as within the international community, but not “proud[ly]” so, nor “in its own right”. If it can be seen as within the international community, it is only there because of Britain’s magnanimous responsibility to save. So here we have the clear acknowledgement that Africa, and NEPAD, require Britain, and the CA, to survive and eventually become true subjects.

### *Pity: Deconstructing the Responsibility to Save*

With the supplementation of NEPAD by the CA, of African efforts with British, we can see that the ethics of a ‘responsibility to save’ appear stuck in the reversal phase of deconstruction. It seems that the ‘responsibility to save’ rather than being a moral, ethical principle is revealed to be precisely *immoral* and *unethical*. However, things are not so simple. If we look at this ‘responsibility to save’ as primarily a matter of *pity*, we can see that, once again, responsibility deconstructs within the British foreign policy text. The ‘responsibility to save’ is always already both moral and immoral, responsible and irresponsible action.

Referring to section one, we can see that primarily, the obligation and responsibility in British foreign policy arises from being, as Cook put it, witnesses to human tragedy.<sup>700</sup> In other words, we are responsible because we experience *pity* when we see human suffering. The word ‘pity’ comes from the Latin *pietas*, via the Old French *pite* meaning a feeling of ‘compassion’ at the suffering of others.<sup>701</sup> We can see this compassion in the

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<sup>699</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>700</sup> Cook, “Mission Statement”.

<sup>701</sup> Judy Persall (ed.), *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 1090.



speeches of foreign ministers and the Prime Minister. But, crucially, we can also see another aspect of ‘pity’, that noted by Nietzsche: its irrevocable link with ‘contempt’. This draws out the conception of Africa being marked by a ‘lack’ which needed supplementation above.

In *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche claims that pity is “felt as a sign of contempt because one has clearly ceased to be an object of *fear* as soon as one is pitied”.<sup>702</sup> In *Daybreak* he expands somewhat, saying that pity is as good as contempt because we get no enjoyment from seeing a “contemptible creature suffer”, but to see an enemy, who is your equal, suffer is an “enjoyment of enjoyments”.<sup>703</sup> This is because you admire your enemy; to see him suffer is to increase your respect for his resilience. This respect, because he is your enemy, is also a form of fear. To show pity is to show that you do not see the person as capable of handling the pain, thus you do not fear him, indeed that you *must save* him because he is incapable of helping himself. Pity is an acknowledgement of a person’s *incapacity* and *lack*, and therefore deeply humiliating for the person pitied. To pity a person is to see them as incapable where you are capable, as beneath you. In the terms used in the current discussion, to pity is to view as an object who is done-to, rather than a subject who does. To pity is to view with *contempt*.

In this way, the possibility of morally saving ‘Africans’ is undermined by its necessary corollary: to do so is to objectify, patronise and treat ‘Africa’ with contempt. This is shown by the way that ‘Africa’ is treated as a homogeneous problem, and African efforts at development (NEPAD) are seen as insufficient and requiring British supplementation (CA). The ‘responsibility to save’ reveals both a moral responsibility to help one’s fellow man but, equally necessarily, an immoral, irresponsible contempt. The responsibility to “intervene... to do what we can to save African nations from barbarism and dictatorship”<sup>704</sup> both seeks to bring African nations into the international community as subjects capable of accepting responsibilities (“[t]he prize for success would be an

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<sup>702</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, all too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*, translated by R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 322.

<sup>703</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*, translated by R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 86.

<sup>704</sup> Blair, Mansion House Speech.



Africa standing proud in its own right in the international community”),<sup>705</sup> and reproduces their patronised ‘object-hood’, their status as a ‘scar’ to be healed by the developed world (“[i]f Africa is a scar on the conscience of our world, the world has a duty to heal it, heal it we can and we must...”)<sup>706</sup> The ‘responsibility to save’ cannot be simply either responsible nor irresponsible, ethical or unethical. It can only ever be both and neither at the same time, undecidable as to its true nature.

## *Conclusion*

This chapter examined the ethical dimension in British foreign policy through the concept of ‘responsibility’. The previous chapter looked at the importance of the *taking* of responsibility, the possibility of which appears to constitute subjectivity in the British and EU foreign policy text. This chapter, in contrast, focused on the *enactment* of responsibility, or rather, how such enactment is represented. However, just as the subject of British and EU foreign policy deconstructed under a close reading, showing itself to be undecidable, so the possibility of enacting responsibility has demonstrated its undecidability.

The chapter was split into three sections. The first of these sought to establish with textual evidence that moral ‘responsibility’ in the British foreign policy discourse appeared to come from unnecessary human suffering. To the extent that this conception of responsibility is grounded, it is grounded in a particular conception of the ‘human’. The second and third sections split British foreign policy up into the two most prominent examples of how the enactment of responsibility is represented. The first of these, the ‘responsibility to protect’ citizens in other states, has been given the most attention as it surrounds the possibility of ‘humanitarian intervention’.

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<sup>705</sup> Blair, “Speech on Africa”.

<sup>706</sup> Blair, Speech to WSSD in South Africa.



Having outlined the development of this ‘responsibility to protect’ within the DIC, with its rights and responsibilities, the cases of Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan were presented as examples of this in British foreign policy. This revealed the anomaly of Iraq, which was said not to fit into the DIC. However, closer analysis shows that Iraq is brought back into the DIC and the ‘responsibility to protect’. The invasion of Iraq as both marginal *and central* is crucial because it means we can generalise out from the discourse surrounding it. The acknowledgement of morality on both sides of the argument in Iraq (producing an ‘eternal moral dilemma’) meant that we could show how the very concept of the ‘responsibility to protect’ deconstructs. It is both moral and immoral, responsible and irresponsible, always-already ethically *undecidable*.

The third section focused on the latter half of Britain’s post-1997 foreign policy. Since 2001/2 it is argued that there has been a growing effort to enact a ‘responsibility to save’ Africa, culminating in the 2005 ‘Year for Africa’. It was initially demonstrated how this was constituted as a moral cause, and how this ‘responsibility to save’ developed in line with the rights and responsibilities principles of the DIC. The key word, it appeared, was a ‘partnership’ of equals, abandoning the old, unethical, patronising and contemptuous attitude of donor and passive recipient. This was especially promoted in relation to the two key British foreign policies: support for NEPAD and the institution of the CA.

The deconstruction of this ‘responsibility to save’ was made possible, however, by examining how the relationship between these two key policies was represented in the British foreign policy text. NEPAD, the African leaders’ effort to help themselves, was revealed to be inadequate and required the Blairite supplement: the CA. As a classic Derridean supplement, African efforts were revealed as both complete in themselves, and then wholly inadequate and in need of replacement by more ‘comprehensive’ British policies. The responsibility to save thus embodies two contradictory elements of the word pity: a compassionate prevention of unnecessary death and suffering, and a contemptuous objectification of the ‘African’ other. Once again, these two elements of ‘responsibility’ are inseparable, and responsibility is shown to be both ethical and unethical, responsible and irresponsible.



Throughout this chapter the undecidability of responsibility has been stressed. When combined with the previous chapter we can see the implications of this for ethics and foreign policy in the British text. Not only is the subjectivity constructed by Britain, the possibility of *taking* responsibility, inherently unstable and undecidable, the way that ethical responsibility is *enacted* is also both ethical and unethical. Neither the taking of responsibility, nor its enactment, can be stabilised in an ethical representation. However, as noted in the previous chapter, the construction of EU subjectivity and the way it represents its responsibility are different to that of the British text. Responsibility for the EU ‘home’ is primarily exercised as a *hospitality*. The next chapter thus examines whether these effects of the unstable ‘EU’ subject are any more secure than those of the ‘British’.



## *Chapter V*

### *Hospitality: Home and Family*

#### *Introduction*

The previous chapter examined the undecidability of responsibility as an effect of the problematic construction of subjectivity in British foreign policy. Analysis of the EU and British foreign policy text in Chapter III revealed that the ability to accept one's responsibilities was central to the way the subject of ethics and foreign policy is represented. The representation of the way ethical responsibility is exercised differs markedly between the two foreign policies. While the text stresses the responsibility to *protect* and save, this chapter examines how EU foreign policy constructs its discourse of responsibility around the notion of *hospitality*. This marks, once again, the way the three concepts examined (subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality) are far from separate; all three refer to the British and EU construction of the possibility of ethics and foreign policy as that of a responsible relation to otherness.

As illustrated in Chapter II, hospitality is an important concept in international relations, though often ignored in the extant literature. When it is used, the emphasis is placed on granting hospitality to *individuals*, especially the refugee.<sup>707</sup> In the EU foreign policy text, the focus in contrast is upon welcoming in nation-states. Kant's cosmopolitan right to "universal hospitality" was defined as "the right of a stranger not to be treated with hostility when he arrives on someone else's territory".<sup>708</sup> In broader terms, we can see hospitality as simply an *openness to the other*, the stranger, who comes from outside and is received into our home. This definition is elaborated upon and problematised in section two.

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<sup>707</sup> For example, Dillon, "The Scandal of the Refugee".

<sup>708</sup> Kant, *Political Writings*, p. 105.



There are three EU foreign policies examined in this chapter all of which are based, to varying degrees, on such a hospitable openness to the other. Firstly, there is the cornerstone of EU foreign policy during this period: enlargement.<sup>709</sup> This is represented as the most simply hospitable foreign policy, literally a welcoming of other countries into the EU home. Secondly, there is the policy towards the Balkans. This develops through the period under study from an offer of ‘virtual membership’ into a matter of conditionally beckoning the Balkan countries into the EU. Finally, there is the far more circumscribed hospitality of the ENP. This is represented as friendly and generous, while not *fully* welcoming the other *into* the EU.

The chapter proceeds in three sections. The first expands upon the brief discussion of the ethical in EU foreign policy in Chapter IV and how it is based on a responsibility of proximity. This responsibility sees its main enactment in the concept of hospitality as described above. Just as with Derrida’s concept, EU hospitality is based on the EU as ‘home’ or ‘family’. This familial imaginary of the EU is both *geographical* (bounded by the 15, and by 2004, the 25 member states borders) and *moral* (based on a range of ethical and political values seen as ‘European’). Welcoming others into *this* family home can only be the height of ethical foreign policy for the EU. As Patten put it: “[w]hat better way could there have been of treating a neighbour than inviting them into our home?”<sup>710</sup>

Section two examines the first two EU foreign policies mentioned above: enlargement and the policy towards the Balkans. A close reading of the discourse surrounding these policies will reveal the internal tensions within the ethical concept of hospitality. What Derrida calls the ‘two laws’ of hospitality means that hospitality, like responsibility, is essentially undecidable and divided against itself. A policy of hospitality is caught up in the contradiction between an absolute, unconditional welcoming of the other, and a limited, conditional welcoming. Thus the policy towards the Balkans, especially,

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<sup>709</sup> The fact that this can also be seen as a ‘domestic’ policy is considered on p. 186 below.

<sup>710</sup> Chris Patten, *Not Quite the Diplomat: Home Truths about World Affairs* (London: Allen Lane, 2005), p. 177.



demonstrates that the EU can only ever be welcoming *and* unwelcoming, ethical *and* unethical towards others.

Section three shows how this contradictory ethics is further borne out by the ENP. The heavily circumscribed hospitality offered by this policy emphasises that, in the EU's own terms, its concept of the ethical deconstructs. Furthermore, the ENP reveals the way that hospitality deconstructs the very possibility of the 'home' which enables it. The unconditional form of hospitality, which even the ENP must retain a reference to, undermines the basis for its own enactment: the inviolable home discussed in section one. Thus, finally, we see that the way EU foreign policy represents its responsibility (through hospitality) undermines its own subjectivity, its own concept of the 'European home'.

### ***Responsibility, Hospitality and the 'Common European Home'***

There is, as observed in the previous chapter, much overlap between how the EU regards the ethical in foreign policy and the British foreign policy discourse. Prodi has already been quoted as saying that that, as Europeans, "our distinguishing feature is our sense of responsibility".<sup>711</sup> The stress is, as in Chapter IV, placed on the notion of a responsibility to protect and save human life. In the most coherent and extensive statement of the ethical in EU foreign policy, Solana notes that humanitarian intervention is a "modern way to describe a very ancient practice. To help out one's fellow human being in a situation of distress".<sup>712</sup> This "simple gesture" is first of all connected to the European welfare state by Solana, but he then expands this beyond both nation-state and EU borders:

However, European solidarity goes far beyond the frontiers of the European Union...  
*Catastrophes happen.* Some we put down to 'natural causes'; others we blame on the darker side

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<sup>711</sup> Prodi, "The European project in the world: between values and politics".

<sup>712</sup> Solana, Speech at the inaugural conference of the course, "Towards a new international morality: the humanitarian interventions".



of human nature – be it embodied in a person or a regime... the consequences are the same: people suffering, lives at risk... *The essence of humanitarian relief is the job of saving lives and of helping the suffering... Bringing relief is always worth it* – and almost at whatever cost when human lives are at stake. But even an intrinsically ethical action must be carried out according to rules and principles, and cannot be standard free.<sup>713</sup>

He acknowledges that such catastrophes have been happening since before the end of the Cold War and all that has changed since is that we see more of it. But this “does not alter the enormous responsibility we have in the face of those tragedies”. It would, he declares, “be morally untenable, sometimes unthinkable, to sit idle, without reacting to such human misery and distress. Therefore we are compelled to act.”<sup>714</sup>

In this representation of the EU’s moral responsibility, we almost see a replication of Cook’s ‘Mission Statement’ in 1997, which affirmed that our being “witness... to human tragedy in distant lands... obliged us to accept moral responsibility for our response”.<sup>715</sup> The EU’s responsibility in a similar way comes from, to paraphrase Solana, the responsibility to save lives and prevent suffering. One interesting difference with this representation and that of responsibility in British foreign policy is that no moral difference is made between *preventable/outrageous* and *unpreventable/acceptable* death. While British foreign policy seems to emphasise the moral repugnance of *non-combatant* suffering and deaths from *preventable* disease, Solana stresses that whatever form suffering and death comes in, “the consequences are the same: people suffering, lives at risk”.<sup>716</sup>

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<sup>713</sup> *Ibid.* – emphasis in original.

<sup>714</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>715</sup> Cook, “Mission Statement”.

<sup>716</sup> Solana, Speech at the inaugural conference of the course, “Towards a new international morality: the humanitarian interventions”.



### *Territorialised Responsibility: The Importance of Proximity*

A more important difference between the British and EU representations of ethical responsibility is the stress placed upon proximity. In the British foreign policy discourse, there is no distinction made between responsibility for those close to us, and those far away.<sup>717</sup> As Blair stated in his 2001 Party Conference Speech, those starving, wretched and dispossessed “from the deserts of Northern Africa to the slums of Gaza, to the mountain ranges of Afghanistan: they too are our cause”.<sup>718</sup> In contrast, the EU discourse places much greater emphasis on its responsibility for those geographically closest to the EU. Chris Patten argued in 2000 that the CFSP is crucial to ensuring the EU is able “to shoulder its share of global responsibilities, beginning – but not ending – with its own backyard”.<sup>719</sup> Responsibility, wherever it may end, *begins* with those closest to the EU.

Similarly, reflecting on a year in office, Solana states that the Balkans have been the top priority for EU foreign policy, while its second priority is the Mediterranean as, “like the Balkans, this region is on our doorstep”.<sup>720</sup> Such foreign policy priorities are justified by proximity over and over again.<sup>721</sup> Chris Patten observes that the EU’s development has given it more responsibilities, but “Europe is bound to give a very high priority to

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<sup>717</sup> The one exception to this rule is in relation to the Kosovo conflict in 1999. Here we saw a stress placed by Blair especially upon the fact that Kosovo was close to us, and specifically, close to the EU. For example, Blair reminds those who disagree with the intervention, “[w]e are talking here not about some far away place of which we know little. We are talking about the doorstep of the European Union, our own back yard” (Blair, “The New Challenge for Europe”). There are at least two explanations for this aberration. The first is that Kosovo occurred early on in the period under study, when the place of ethics and responsibility were not fully worked out in the discourse. The second is that this is a case of ‘intertextuality’ – when the EU foreign policy discourse, never wholly separate from the British, significantly influenced the way the intervention was represented. Later in this section I show the way the EU represents its responsibility to the Balkans as precisely because they are on the ‘doorstep’ of the EU and in our ‘backyard’.

<sup>718</sup> Blair, Party Conference Speech 2001.

<sup>719</sup> Chris Patten, “What does Europe’s CFSP mean for Asia”, Speech to the Japanese Institute for International Affairs, Tokyo, 19 July 2000.

<sup>720</sup> Javier Solana, “Reflections on a year in office”, Speech to the Swedish Institute of International Affairs and Central Defence and Society Federation, 27 October 2000.

<sup>721</sup> See, for example: Solana, “Some Reflections About European Foreign Policy”, Address to the Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, 12 February 2000; Javier Solana, “The Foreign Policy of the EU”, Speech at the Liberal International, The Hague, 7 November 2000; Chris Patten, “Developing Europe’s External Policy in the Age of Globalisation”, Speech at Central Party School, Beijing, 4 April 2002; Javier Solana, Address to the National Forum on Europe, Dublin Castle, 8 January 2004.



relations with its closest neighbours”.<sup>722</sup> Enlargement, for Prodi, gives the EU even more responsibilities, but once again this is “especially as regards our immediate neighbours”.<sup>723</sup> Towards the end of the period studied there remains an emphasis upon the primacy of proximity when it comes to responsibility. Speaking to the European Parliament, Prodi declares that “we assume a clear responsibility in the region... But our responsibilities stretch beyond our region.”<sup>724</sup> Nonetheless, it is proximity that brings a *clear* responsibility.

Solana appears deeply uneasy when pushed on the EU’s *wider* responsibility in 2003. In an interview with *Die Zeit* about the ESDP operation to protect key facilities in the Ituri region of the Congo, he is asked what the “European interest” in the Congo is. Solana states that while the EU has an interest in regional stability, it “furthermore bear[s] a responsibility in the face of human suffering. We must not simply shut our eyes to it.”<sup>725</sup> Yet, the full extent of this responsibility is left unclear. Asked if this responsibility extends to the whole of Africa, the response is, “[n]o, of course not. We are not the Africa Corps.”<sup>726</sup> A follow-up question involves whether this responsibility extends to Africa today, Latin America tomorrow and “the following day the rest of the world?” Once again, the response is ambiguous and uneasy. “No. We do not feel called upon to become a global police force. But we do bear a responsibility for the world, whether we like it or not.”<sup>727</sup>

Patten ties this question of wider responsibility in with the development of the EU, and yet always brings it round to the prioritisation of proximity. In a speech on the EU’s relations with Latin America, he notes that as “Europe develops further, it will have to take ever more account of its global responsibilities and challenges”. With globalisation increasing it is “no longer possible to shut out the rest of the world”. However, he

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<sup>722</sup> Chris Patten, “A Common Foreign Policy for Europe: Relations with Latin America”, Speech to the Consejo Argentino par alas Relaciones Internacionales (CARI), Buenos Aires, 9 November 2000.

<sup>723</sup> Prodi, “The reality of enlargement”.

<sup>724</sup> Romano Prodi, Speech to European Parliament, Strasbourg, 10 February 2004.

<sup>725</sup> Javier Solana, “We are not the Africa Corps”, Interview by Joachim Fritz-Vannahme and Petra Pinzler, in *Die Zeit*, 12 June 2003.

<sup>726</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>727</sup> *Ibid.*



immediately follows this by ignoring Latin America: “Europe is bound to give a very high priority to relations with its closest neighbours.”<sup>728</sup> Speaking in Beijing, Patten talks about the breadth of EU commitments in Latin America, North Korea, Pakistan, Iran, DRC, “[b]ut not unreasonably much of our attention focuses on our ‘near abroad’ that is, on what is happening in our neighbourhood.”<sup>729</sup>

The fact that the EU does not really have a strong ethical or responsible representation of its foreign policy towards the *far* abroad, the *foreign* foreign (rather than the ‘European’ foreign) is shown by the triviality accorded to it in Patten’s memoirs. “As for other countries and continents, it would be wearisome to tour the world, describing visits here, there and everywhere, recounting small victories and whitewashing small defeats.”<sup>730</sup> As a speech writer he used to call such speeches a *tour d’horizon*, but now prefers Denis Healey’s term – “a ‘tour de gloss.’”<sup>731</sup> There is thus uncertainty regarding the EU’s wider responsibility. While the EU *does* bear a responsibility “for the world, whether we like it or not”,<sup>732</sup> it is not yet fully capable of accepting it. There is also confusion about precisely the nature of this wider responsibility, as Solana makes it clear that the EU does not wish to become a global police force. It appears that the EU lacks confidence in its status as a truly global subject. The concentration remains on the EU as a *regional* actor, with primarily *regional* responsibilities.

### *Hospitality and the Common European Home*

The EU’s representation of its responsibility, the ethical dimension to its foreign policy, while extending to the whole world, is far clearer and more confident when expressed in terms of proximity. The EU’s priority is always represented as those closest to it: its ‘neighbours’ and those on its ‘doorstep’. Given that these countries and peoples clearly take priority in the EU’s ethical dimension, how this responsibility is enacted will now

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<sup>728</sup> Patten, “A Common Foreign Policy for Europe: Relations with Latin America”.

<sup>729</sup> Patten, “Developing Europe’s External Policy in the Age of Globalisation”.

<sup>730</sup> Patten, *Not Quite the Diplomat*, p. 174.

<sup>731</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>732</sup> Solana, “We are not the Africa Corps”.



be examined. This enactment, as has been suggested, is represented as an offering of hospitality. After all, when someone is in trouble on our doorstep, what is the obvious, most ethical, thing to do? Surely it is to invite them into our home?

The EU foreign policy discourse during 1999-2004 is replete with hospitable metaphors of families and homes. Much of this emerges in sections two and three when the representations of specific EU foreign policies are investigated. These policies come together in the concept of the European family/home. It is important to examine how the ‘architecture’ of this home is represented, as it forms the basis for the way the EU sees itself and how it enacts its ethical dimension to foreign policy: through hospitality. First of all, however, the importance of a concept of the ‘home’ to a discourse of hospitality must be demonstrated.

This importance is outlined by Derrida in an interview he gave in 1993 (though it was only published in English in 2003). While the international relations context of the interview, the massacres and ethnic cleansing of the Bosnian conflict, reveal that the concept of a national home can be used in an insidious way to violently exclude and kill others, Derrida nonetheless defended the ‘home’. This is because the “unconditional desire [for the home], which is impossible to renounce” also “should not be renounced”, for without the home, “there is no door nor any hospitality”.<sup>733</sup> The singularity of the home should not be given up because, while it can be a violent “closedness”, it is also the very “condition of openness, of hospitality, and of the door”.<sup>734</sup>

On a purely practical level, the possibility of my welcoming someone, of offering hospitality, is predicated on my having a home to welcome them into. Reflecting upon hospitality demands, or presupposes as Derrida says elsewhere, “the possibility of a rigorous delimitation of thresholds or frontiers”,<sup>735</sup> a separation from otherness.<sup>736</sup> A

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<sup>733</sup> Jacques Derrida and Bernard Stiegler, *Echographies of Television: Filmed Interviews*, translated by Jennifer Bajorek (Oxford: Polity, 2002), p. 81.

<sup>734</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>735</sup> Jacques Derrida and Anne Dufourmantelle, *Of Hospitality*, translated by Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), pp. 47-49.



home must be separated and closed, but also, as we shall see in relation to the EU, it must have windows and doors, such that the other can be welcomed in. For hospitality to be possible there must be an inviolable home, but that home must be constituted by closure as *the very possibility* of openness. And for Derrida, ‘hospitality’ in this sense is as close as one can get to a synonym for ethics.

Insofar as it has to do with the *ethos*, that is, the residence, one’s home, the familiar place of dwelling, inasmuch as it is a manner of being there, the manner in which we relate to ourselves and to others, to others as our own or as foreigners, ethics is hospitality; ethics is so thoroughly coextensive with the experience of hospitality.<sup>737</sup>

The ‘home’ is crucial then to the very possibility of both hospitality and ethics. Without it, we have nothing to welcome the other into, nothing to give the other.

This idea of the European, or EU, ‘home’ is closely connected with the metaphor of ‘family’. During one of his first speeches as President of the EU Commission in October 1999, Prodi declares the ambition involved in the enlargement project. “[F]or the first time in history we are unifying Europe! We are bringing together not only countries but, above all, peoples into a new and much larger European family.”<sup>738</sup> In an interesting narrative of the CFSP, Patten notes how the EU has acted to encourage and support candidate countries in their process of reform towards becoming free-market democracies. It has worked at “smothering flash points”, teaching these countries tolerance of criticism and diversity.<sup>739</sup> “In short”, he says, the aim has been to help “these countries become normal, and take their rightful place in the family of European nations.”<sup>740</sup>

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<sup>736</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Adieu: to Emmanuel Levinas*, translated by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 92.

<sup>737</sup> Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>738</sup> Romano Prodi, Speech to the EU-Japan Business Dialogue Roundtable, Brussels, 7 October 1999.

<sup>739</sup> Chris Patten, “A voice for Europe? The future of the CFSP”, Brian Lenihan Memorial Lecture, Dublin, 7 March 2001.

<sup>740</sup> *Ibid.*



In 2002, Prodi adds the ‘home’ to his metaphor of the family, suggesting that the policies of enlargement and cooperation with neighbouring countries “will lead to a new architecture for the whole continent. A new structure for our common European home.”<sup>741</sup> Patten had already championed this spatial imagery early in 2000. Speaking to the Foreign Affairs and Legal Committees of the Albanian Parliament, he praises Albania’s democratic reform and hospitality to Kosovan refugees. “In short, you have returned to the European family and you look, rightly, to the rest of Europe to welcome you home... The challenge is to maintain these efforts, to stay on the right road – the road to Europe.”<sup>742</sup> If Albania is *returning* to Europe on this road, it appears that the metaphorical road becomes circular – *from* Europe, *to* Europe. This will be picked up later. There is clearly a distinction here, however, between the European *family*, which Albania has returned to through its democratic reform and hospitality, and a European *home*, which Albania has not yet reached. Rather, it is on the *road* towards that home. This ‘road to Europe’ will take up great prominence in the discussion of EU policy towards the Balkans in section two.

In this section however, we can already see that Patten characterises EU policy towards the Balkans as “about building peace and security, not just in our backyard but in our front yard too”.<sup>743</sup> The difference is not quite clear, but he adds that its importance is because peace and security is necessary as “an integral part of our European common home”.<sup>744</sup> Perhaps here there is an indication that the Balkans are potentially part of the common home but are currently its front/backyard. Certainly this confusion is a constituent part of the EU’s ambiguous representation of the Balkans. As we have seen, occasionally they are treated as part of the European family, though not yet the home, while other times they are treated simply as a neighbouring region, along with Russia and the ‘Mediterranean’ – a term largely designating the Middle East.<sup>745</sup> However, by

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<sup>741</sup> Romano Prodi, “The EU, the UK and the world”, Speech to Said Business School, Oxford, 29 April 2002.

<sup>742</sup> Chris Patten, Speech to the Foreign Affairs and Legal Committees of the Albanian Parliament, Tirana, 6 March 2000.

<sup>743</sup> Chris Patten, Speech to the European Parliament on the Stabilisation and Association Process and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, Strasbourg, 12 April 2000.

<sup>744</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>745</sup> Prodi, “The EU, the UK and the world”.



the end of 2002 the Balkans are being sent a “clear message” of hospitality by Prodi, who says that “the EU’s door is open and we hope to invite them in as soon as possible”.<sup>746</sup> Solana further emphasises this hospitality, telling Bosnians that if they chose reform, “the door of Europe is open to you”.<sup>747</sup> Similarly, though they are not yet being invited in, he tells Serbians that their “new democratic leadership opened the door for Serbia to join the European mainstream”.<sup>748</sup>

The potential resolution of the Balkans liminal status illustrates how the European family home, as well as having a road which leads to its door, also has a neighbourhood, which is sometimes described as a backyard. This illustrates the importance of proximity in the EU’s foreign policy discourse. A major aspect of EU foreign policy is concentrated on, as Prodi puts it, “our neighbourhood in the literal sense of the word, our backyard”. These countries, including “our future eastern neighbours and the whole Mediterranean area” are described as a “ring of friends... from Morocco to Russia to the Black Sea.”<sup>749</sup> This representation of such countries as ‘neighbours’ and ‘friends’ of the EU is repeated over and over again in the speeches of Prodi from 2003 onwards.<sup>750</sup> It is significant that, firstly, the spatial metaphor designates them as *neighbours* to the European *home* – i.e. not within the home, but outside – and, secondly, the relationship metaphor designating them as *friends* to the European *family* – i.e. not part of the family, but close to it.

As stated in the introduction, although there is an evident geographical element to who is ‘in’ the EU family home, who is on the road to it, and who is consigned to the backyard neighbourhood, there is also an ethical element. As Derrida observes, hospitality is about ethics as the *ethos*, as “the residence, one’s home, the familiar place of dwelling,

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<sup>746</sup> Prodi, “The reality of enlargement”.

<sup>747</sup> Solana, Interview with *Dnevi Avaz* (BiH newspaper).

<sup>748</sup> Javier Solana and Franco Frattini, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, “Choosing Reform”, Article in *Politika* (Serbian newspaper), 15 December 2003.

<sup>749</sup> Romano Prodi, “A Wider Europe – A Proximity Policy as the key to stability”, Speech at Sixth ECSA-World Conference, Brussels, 5-6 December 2002.

<sup>750</sup> For example, Romano Prodi, Speech at the signing of the Treaty of Accession Ceremony, Athens, 16 April 2003; Romano Prodi, Speech to EU-Balkan Summit, Thessaloniki, 21 June 2003; Romano Prodi, “Looking ahead in transatlantic relations”, Dinner speech at Rayburn House with German Marshall Fund of the United States, Washington DC, 24 June 2003; Romano Prodi, “Sharing stability and prosperity”, Speech at Tempus MEDA Regional Conference, Bibliotheca Alexandria, 13 October 2003; Romano Prodi, Speech to European Parliament, Strasbourg, 10 February 2004.



inasmuch as it is a matter of being there, the manner in which we relate to ourselves and to others”.<sup>751</sup> The ‘home’ or residence constitutes us, forms our subjectivity. For the EU, this ethos, this ‘home’, is not just about geography, but also about European values and ethics. In setting out Europe’s role in a future system of world governance, Prodi argues in March 2000 that any such system must be based on “shared values such as justice and fair play, sustainability and subsidiarity, transparency and democratic accountability.”<sup>752</sup> Why should these specific values be at the heart of the EU’s foreign policy? Because they are part of the EU’s *ethos*, part of what makes the EU the EU, a constitutive element of the common European home.

The European Union already enshrines and promotes precisely those values. They are a part of Europe’s distinctive political and ethical heritage, and they reflect in large measure our humanist tradition and the moral legacy of the three Mediterranean faiths. That is why I want Europe to be at the forefront of global progress, shaping the world of tomorrow... It also means making progress on enlargement unifying our continent around ethical and political values, and influencing our neighbours to share those values.<sup>753</sup>

Building on this speech a week later in Vienna, Prodi argues that “social and ethical values such as tolerance, inclusiveness, social justice and respect for other cultures... are what give Europe its sense of corporate identity”.<sup>754</sup>

These ethical and political values are explicitly associated with the European family, and the enlargement policy of the EU. Prodi claims that the reconstitution of the “extended family of European nations and, above all, peoples” is not about homogenisation but about “bringing together diverse people who are heirs to a common civilisation”.<sup>755</sup> The peoples in this family share “unchanging fundamental values such as democracy, respect for human rights, the protection of minorities and the rules of law. Values that give us

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<sup>751</sup> See p. 181 for full quotation.

<sup>752</sup> Romano Prodi, “Europe and Global Governance”, Speech to 2<sup>nd</sup> COMECE congress, Brussels, 31 March 2000.

<sup>753</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>754</sup> Romano Prodi, Inauguration of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, Vienna, 7 April 2000.

<sup>755</sup> Romano Prodi, “Bringing the family together”, Speech to the Academy of Sciences, Budapest, 4 April 2001.



unity in our diversity.”<sup>756</sup> These ‘values’ are, says Solana, what the EU’s foreign policy is about. The EU, he claims, is “founded on the values of tolerance, democracy and respect for human rights... Our foreign policy should be nothing less than the projection of those values.”<sup>757</sup> Similarly, in the wake of what he calls the “crisis” of the EU’s inability to agree a common position on the war in Iraq, Prodi dismisses the possibility of a return to nineteenth century balance-of-power politics. “[I]t would be contrary to the very nature of the Union, which is based on dialogue, solidarity, multilateralism and an ethical dimension to politics”.<sup>758</sup>

This section has established that, while responsibility to protect and save human life is key to the way the EU views ethics and foreign policy, there is a significant element of proximity in its representation of this responsibility. In other words, responsibility towards those closest to the EU in geographical terms is given highest priority. The primary way this ethical responsibility is exercised is through the EU’s discourse of hospitality: a welcoming, or beckoning, of the proximate other into the EU home or family. Such a hospitality however, presupposes the importance of a ‘home’ which the other can be welcomed into. Thus, the concept of the ‘common European home’ is emphasised as a community of political and ethical values which define the subjectivity of the EU as a foreign policy actor. The EU ‘home’ is thereby represented as an ethical and moral *space*, and thus nothing could be more ethical, more responsible, than welcoming an other into that space.

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<sup>756</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>757</sup> Javier Solana, “EU Foreign Policy”, Speech at the Hendrik Brugmans Memorial, Bruges, 25 April 2001.

<sup>758</sup> Prodi, Report to the European Parliament on the Spring European Council.



## *Enlargement, the Balkans and the Two Laws of Hospitality*

This section problematises the simplicity of this hospitality by examining two EU foreign policies with an ethical, hospitable dimension and explaining how they reveal problems integral to hospitality. Enlargement and the EU's policies towards the Balkans are represented as a simple enactment of hospitality, but having illustrated these representations, the contradictions they show in the possibility of hospitality and the ethical are drawn out. What Derrida calls the two laws of hospitality<sup>759</sup> show that although EU foreign policy is ethical and hospitable, even in its own terms it is also always-already unethical and inhospitable towards its proximate others.

### *Enlargement: Welcome to the European Family/Home*

As explained above, the most basic ethical foreign policy tool that can be used by an institution which describes itself as a family and home is that of inviting others into its home. This could be seen as hospitality plain and simple, what was termed an openness to the other. And it is the policy pursued by the EU under the title of 'Enlargement'. Such hospitality/enlargement may, however, be considered problematic as a 'foreign' policy. After all, Patten himself observes that "the EU was in a sense created as an alternative to foreign policy".<sup>760</sup> To bring other peoples and nations *into* the EU then could be seen as an *ending* of foreign policy rather than a tool *of* it. Nonetheless, enlargement is represented by the EU as very much a foreign policy. Indeed, Patten claims in 2002 that "in Central and Eastern Europe, we are using the prospect of EU membership as a specific and successful tool of foreign policy".<sup>761</sup> Later he even describes it as "the most successful foreign policy pursued by Europe".<sup>762</sup>

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<sup>759</sup> Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, p. 77.

<sup>760</sup> Patten, *Not Quite the Diplomat*, p. 160.

<sup>761</sup> Patten, "Developing Europe's External Policy in the Age of Globalisation".

<sup>762</sup> Patten, *Not Quite the Diplomat*, p. 152.



As emphasised in section one, this highly successful policy is also represented in moral terms because it is about welcoming others into the EU family of ethical and political values. It is, as Prodi puts it, a matter of the “Slavonic world... rejoining the common European family”.<sup>763</sup> Just as Patten’s metaphorical road appears to be circular (moving *from* Europe and *to* Europe), the language is of *rejoining*. A meta-narrative thus develops in the enlargement discourse of a family home *pre-existing* the EU, one which was perhaps broken up by the Cold War and can now be *reunited*. Enlargement is, therefore, an example of a responsibility exercised towards those closest to the EU, who *were* part of its pre-institutional family home. This is clearly stated by Solana who, soon after taking up his post as HR for the CFSP, claimed that the possibility of enlargement means “[w]e are... confronted with the responsibility for the reunification and reconstruction of Europe.”<sup>764</sup> This makes enlargement a political, economic and “moral imperative”.<sup>765</sup> The EU, he says elsewhere, has “a political and moral responsibility” to support these countries seeking to enter the EU.<sup>766</sup>

Patten, in 2000, calls the enlargement “morally right”<sup>767</sup> and emphasises the democratic nature of the ethical family home the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are being welcomed into.

Enlargement is a profoundly important moral and strategic cause for us. It is the chance to unite our continent at last; the opportunity to entrench liberal plural democracy within Europe’s borders, and to bring fully into the European democratic community our fellow Europeans who were trapped on the wrong side of history.<sup>768</sup>

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<sup>763</sup> Romano Prodi, “The EU, dialogue with religions and peace dialogue: ‘Build Europe, build peace’”, Speech at the conference on Christianity and Democracy in the Future of Europe, Camaldoli, 14 July 2002.

<sup>764</sup> Solana, Speech to the Fernandez Ordonez Seminar.

<sup>765</sup> *Ibid.* This is repeated many times, see for example Javier Solana, “Towards a Stronger Alliance”, Article in *European Affairs*, 12 April 2000.

<sup>766</sup> Javier Solana, Speech to the European Parliament, 1 March 2000.

<sup>767</sup> Chris Patten, “Towards a common European foreign policy: how are we doing?” Winston Churchill Memorial Lecture, Luxembourg, 10 October 2000.

<sup>768</sup> Patten, “A Common Foreign Policy for Europe: Relations with Latin America”.



Prodi, as ever, goes one step further, suggesting that the economic reasons for enlargement are secondary to the “political and ethical reasons. Enlargement” he declares “is the fulfilment of the European project”.<sup>769</sup>

If we conceive of hospitality as, primarily and simply stated, an openness towards the other, what could be more ethical than the EU’s policy of enlargement? When Patten asks if there could be a better way of treating the neighbour than inviting them into our home,<sup>770</sup> we should clearly take this ‘better’ in an economic, political *and moral* sense. Given that ‘our home’ is represented as a space of political and economic good governance, where human rights and other ethical values flourish, enlargement can be viewed as a transparently ethically successful foreign policy. It is ethics and responsibility primarily conceived in terms of an open hospitality.

### *The Balkans: On the ‘Road’ to the Home*

Discussion of the Balkans is ever present in the EU foreign policy discourse from 1999-2004. Patten talks about “events in the Balkans” being “etched” into every European’s conscience.<sup>771</sup> Prodi affirms this in claiming that it is the “moral duty” of the EU “to take care of the Balkan countries”.<sup>772</sup> Solana describes the EU’s experience of the Balkans as “sobering”, but also as providing an “opportunity. It is a test of our commitment to the region, to a wider Europe, and to a mature common foreign and security policy.”<sup>773</sup> Patten emphasises this representation, saying “the region offers the defining test of our nascent CFSP”.<sup>774</sup>

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<sup>769</sup> Romano Prodi, “Enlargement – the final lap”, Speech to European Parliament, Brussels, 9 October 2002.

<sup>770</sup> Patten, *Not Quite the Diplomat*, p. 177.

<sup>771</sup> Chris Patten, “Europe must solve its own conflicts”, Interview with *Die Zeit*, 6 February 2000.

<sup>772</sup> Romano Prodi, “Towards a European civil society”, Speech commencing second European Social Week, Bad Honnef, 6 April 2000.

<sup>773</sup> Javier Solana, “The Development of a Common Foreign and Security Policy”, Keynote Speech to Diplomatia, Rome, 26 June 2000.

<sup>774</sup> Chris Patten, “South East Europe – joining the European mainstream”, Speech at the Balkans Conference, FCO, London, 7 July 2000.



To refer back to Chapter III on subjectivity, viewing the Balkans as a test for EU foreign policy means it is a test of the EU's constructed subjectivity as an international actor. Testing the maturity of the CFSP is also a test of the EU's capacity to take responsibilities, to accept its international duties, or at least its *regional* duties as illustrated above. And nowhere could this test be stronger than in the region where "[a]s Europeans we cannot avoid a heavy share of responsibility for what happened", especially in Kosovo.<sup>775</sup> Therefore, the way the Balkans are handled in this period is formative for how the EU constructs itself as a subject. The development of the EU foreign policy to a coherent point suggested in section one is demonstrated here – the Balkans as on the road to the EU, knocking at the door of the family home. However, the reasons for this 'road-bound' status illustrate Derrida's observations on the divided and problematic nature of 'hospitality' itself.

From 1999-2002, the EU foreign policy discourse, as stated earlier, was somewhat ambiguous on the status of the Balkans in the EU's spatial imaginary of its home and family. In 1999, at the very beginning of his term as President of the EU Commission, Prodi talked about the importance of "mak[ing] it clear to Albania and the countries of the Former Yugoslavia that we see them as part of the European family of nations".<sup>776</sup> Initially, they are offered "virtual membership".<sup>777</sup> This was designed to ensure they felt part of the family "and that once they have met the criteria for membership we shall welcome them into the EU, provided certain important steps are taken beforehand".<sup>778</sup> Nonetheless, in 2002, Prodi still occasionally refers to the Balkans as a "neighbouring region", such as Russia and the Mediterranean.<sup>779</sup> Similarly, Patten talks about extending peace, stability and prosperity to "our Balkan neighbours".<sup>780</sup>

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<sup>775</sup> Patten, "The Western Balkans: The Road to Europe".

<sup>776</sup> Romano Prodi, Speech to the European Parliament on enlargement, Brussels, 13 October 1999.

<sup>777</sup> Romano Prodi, "The European Union and the challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century", Speech to 21<sup>st</sup> Forum on Financial Policy and Taxation, Karlsruhe, 12 November 1999.

<sup>778</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>779</sup> Prodi, "The EU, the UK and the world".

<sup>780</sup> Patten, "A voice for Europe? The future of the CFSP".



Therefore, though the EU foreign policy text retains ambiguity on the ethics and hospitality that would be offered to the Balkans,<sup>781</sup> it also begins to settle into the spatial metaphors mentioned in section one. As Patten stated in 2000, Albania is looking to Europe to be welcomed “home” and they must “stay on the right road – the road to Europe”.<sup>782</sup> Solana begins to talk about the Balkans as on a “journey” which “[w]e must help them to complete.” We must also, he says, “help the straggler [Serbia] along”.<sup>783</sup> The metaphor of the “road to Europe” is used often by Patten, and it develops further. For example, in a speech to Bosnians, Patten suggests that the EU can “help build that road... we can flag the staging posts, and applaud you as you pass them”, all of which means they will ensure “BiH [Bosnia and Herzegovina] never has to walk the road to Europe alone”.<sup>784</sup>

Speaking of a metaphorical “road to Europe,” which has staging posts, as well as of a “straggler” on a journey, represents progress towards membership of the EU as a linear track. On this track you can be more or less advanced. Each step taken forwards is towards the European home, towards *becoming* European. The only other options are to move slowly, like Serbia, stop, or even move backwards. But sideways movements appear to be impossible. As members of the European family of nations the Balkans can only move unilinearly towards, or away from, the home. And at the end of this road is the door, which they are assured is open to them.<sup>785</sup> Yet, the metaphor does not always work. As mentioned previously, the ‘road’ or ‘journey’ is represented as a circular *return* of the Balkans to the family home. If this is the case, moving back would also take them towards the family home. Given that backwards movement is represented as regressive, the Balkans are not *returning* or *rejoining* the same family home, but rather *joining* something very different: the EU.

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<sup>781</sup> This was a constructive ambiguity. While the UK had stated its position that Balkan accession was a moral requirement – see Cook, “Bosnia: a new hope”; Blair, “The New Challenges for Europe”, 20 May 1999 – this was by no means a consensus position within the EU as a whole.

<sup>782</sup> Patten, Speech to the Foreign Affairs and Legal Committees of the Albanian Parliament.

<sup>783</sup> Javier Solana, “The European Union is assisting recovery – but much work remains to be done”, Article in *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, 24 March 2000.

<sup>784</sup> Patten, Speech to the Peace Implementation Council.

<sup>785</sup> Solana, Interview with *Dnevi Avaz* (BiH newspaper).



What has barely been mentioned thus far, however, is the conditionality which is placed on the EU's hospitality to the Balkans. The unilinear progress down the European road means precisely progress on meeting the conditions for entry into the home, and thus membership of the EU. The Stabilisation and Association Agreements made with each of the Balkan countries are represented as commitments by the EU to help them "along what I call the 'road to Europe'; and commitments on the part of the countries themselves to thoroughgoing reform".<sup>786</sup> In a generalised representation of the conditions the Balkan countries must meet Patten says that, "if they chose democracy, if they chose open economics, if they chose the rule of law, we would want to bring them closer to the European family".<sup>787</sup>

While, as was revealed earlier, the EU feels a great responsibility for the Balkans which is "etched" in their conscience, the responsibility for entering the European home is shifted to the Balkan countries themselves. Patten tells Bosnians that "we have to redouble our efforts" towards this reform. He specifies that this 'we' is meant "in its most *inclusive* sense. But it is a *we* whose main burden actually falls on *you, you the leaders and people of Bosnia Herzegovina*."<sup>788</sup> Similarly, when asked by a Macedonian journalist what answer the FYROM can expect from the EU on its application for membership, Solana replies "[t]hat question is not for me to answer, it is for the people and politicians of your country."<sup>789</sup> The responsibility for the EU's hospitality is placed on the shoulders of the Balkans itself. *They* are now responsible for the EU's ethical foreign policy. This places the subjectivity of the EU, as that which is able to take responsibility by acting hospitably, in question. It is no longer the EU who takes responsibility, or acts ethically, but rather the Balkans.

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<sup>786</sup> Chris Patten, Speech to the OSCE Permanent Council, Vienna, 23 November 2000.

<sup>787</sup> Chris Patten, Interview with BBC and ITN Television, Zagreb, 24 November 2000.

<sup>788</sup> Patten, Speech to the Peace Implementation Council – emphasis in original.

<sup>789</sup> Javier Solana, Written interview with Solbodanka Jonavoska in *Ultrinski Vesnik* (FYROM Newspaper), 23 February 2004.



In 2001 Patten translates this into his spatial metaphor once again:

The Agreements [Stabilisation and Association Agreements] are the vehicle that helps you along the road, the road to Europe. The speed at which you travel along that road is up to you. The faster you reform, the more you show that our values, the values the EU represents, are your values, the faster we will be able to cover the distance – politically, at least – between Brussels and Skopje, or Brussels and Belgrade, Sarajevo, Tirana, or Zagreb.<sup>790</sup>

In other words, to place your self on the road to the European home, you must demonstrate that you are already *part of it*, in terms of the values (democracy, free markets, human rights, rule of law) set out above, in section one. These are the conditions that must be met. As Solana puts it, “[t]he path to Europe is paved with concrete reform, not just good intentions.”<sup>791</sup>

### *The Two Laws of Hospitality*

Clearly the enactment of the EU’s ethical dimension towards the Balkans is represented differently to that of their enlargement policy. What is the status of this far more conditional hospitality? Is it still ethical? Can we still call it hospitality? On a basic level, as suggested in the introduction, hospitality is simply *openness towards the other*. This does not get us very far however: the EU may seem open to the Balkans, but certainly not *as* open as it is to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. What is needed therefore is a closer reading of the concept of hospitality, for which we can turn once more to the work of Derrida.

The simplicity of this definition (hospitality as an openness to the other) is problematic because it hides within it a crucial distinction between what Derrida calls the two laws of

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<sup>790</sup> Chris Patten, Speech to the South East Europe Cooperation Process (SEEC) Summit, Skopje, 23 February 2001.

<sup>791</sup> Solana, Interview with *Dnevi Avaz* (BiH newspaper).



hospitality: or rather *the* law, and the laws.<sup>792</sup> *The* unconditional law of absolute hospitality,

requires that I open up my home and that I give not only to the foreigner... but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other, and that I give place to them, that I let them come, that I let them arrive, and take place in the place I offer them, without asking of them either reciprocity (entering into a pact) or even their names.<sup>793</sup>

Absolute, unconditional hospitality then calls for us not just to invite the guest into our home without asking questions, but to allow them to come without invitation (a hospitality of *visitation* as opposed to *invitation*).<sup>794</sup> We must not just give them *a* bed to sleep in and food to eat, but *our* bed and *our* food.

As such, absolute hospitality must break with hospitality by right, or duty, what Derrida calls the juridico-political laws of hospitality, which are always conditional.<sup>795</sup> They are conditional because, like the asylum and immigration laws in any country, they put a variety of conditions upon hospitality (you must have the right documentation, a visa, a job to go to etc.), ask a variety of questions (your name, your origin, your purpose for entry etc.), may partake of an economy of reciprocity (such as a visa waiver agreement between states), or demand an invitation (such as a work permit).

The hospitality offered to the Balkans by the EU is heavily conditional: it asks questions, is involved in a reciprocal notion of responsibility and demands an invitation. These countries must demonstrate what Patten and Prodi call their “properly European vocation”.<sup>796</sup> This can only be done by showing that they *are European*, that they belong in the European home. Far from an absolute hospitality, where no questions are asked of the other prior to their being welcomed into the home, the EU literally asks *thousands* of

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<sup>792</sup> Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, p. 77.

<sup>793</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>794</sup> Derrida, “Autoimmunity”, p.129.

<sup>795</sup> Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, p. 77.

<sup>796</sup> Patten, Interview with BBC and ITN Television.



questions (in fact, over 2,500).<sup>797</sup> When the FYROM applied for membership of the EU, when one could say it was knocking on the door of the European home, the door turned out to be not as open as was previously suggested. Prodi inducted a ceremony in 2004, handing over a questionnaire to the FYROM government. “We expect”, he says, “to receive replies to an impressive number of questions... which will allow the Commission (together with other information) to formulate its Opinion if the country is ready to undertake the rights and obligations of membership to the EU”.<sup>798</sup> Entry into the common European home demands an invitation, which the EU Commission will give an opinion on whether to offer or not.

To be absolutely responsible then, the EU would have to enact an absolute form of hospitality, to ask no questions, to set no conditions upon entry and to demand no reciprocal responsibility. Each condition that is set upon entry into the home is a nullification of hospitality, a violent exclusion that attempts to make the other into the *same* before entry is granted. It makes hospitality the responsibility of the Balkan countries rather than that of the EU; a responsibility to *become* European, to no longer be other, to no longer be *outside*, before being allowed inside. Quite literally, it makes of hospitality a *hostility* to otherness. The conditional hospitality of enlargement, with its selection of the *same* and exclusion of the *other*, cannot help but be both hospitable and *hostile*. It is hostile towards the other who is absolutely excluded, and hostile to the *otherness* that must become the same to be included.

Yet, the absolute, unconditional law of hospitality is, as Derrida himself acknowledges, impossible to practically implement or organise. One cannot derive a politics from it.<sup>799</sup> In one sense it is absolutely naïve and utopic. Such a pure hospitality “can have no legal or political status. No state can write it into laws.”<sup>800</sup> Nonetheless, the retention of unconditional hospitality is essential. Without “at least the thought of this pure and

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<sup>797</sup> Romano Prodi, “Croatia’s journey towards EU membership”, Speech to Croatian Parliament, Zagreb, 10 July 2003.

<sup>798</sup> Romano Prodi, “On the path to the EU: challenges and opportunities”, FYROM Government Assembly, Skopje, 1 October 2004.

<sup>799</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 17.

<sup>800</sup> Derrida, “Autoimmunity”, p. 129.



unconditional hospitality, of hospitality *itself* there could be no conditional hospitality, or way to determine its rules.<sup>801</sup> As Patten says, quoting Samuel Butler (the literary historian and author of *Erewhon*), “[e]xtremes are alone logical, and they are always absurd; the mean is alone practicable and it is always illogical.”<sup>802</sup>

Conditions upon an unconditional, such as those placed on the Balkans entry into the European home (the EU), can only arise as contaminations of the pure ethical concept. Yet to retain the name of that concept (hospitality and ethics) these contaminations must also retain a reference to it. To remain logical, to still *be* hospitable, one must retain a reference to the extreme or absolute form of hospitality. But any dilution of this extreme can be nothing but illogical, and thus inhospitable. Thus, for the EU to only give hospitality to the Central and Eastern European countries (as happened in the 2004 enlargement) is less hospitable than to give hospitality to the Balkan countries as well; but we can only say this because we refer to the unconditional form of hospitality as absolute openness. Hospitality to all countries would be *closer* to the ideal. The unconditional is the condition of the conditional. In other words, unconditional hospitality as a complete openness to the other is a necessary reference point for a conditional, selective hospitality. Without the unconditional *law* of hospitality, the laws would be just that, *laws*, rather than laws *of hospitality*. The laws are impossible to determine without reference to *the* law.

Hospitality, on which the EU bases the ethical dimension of its foreign policy, is both divided against itself, and yet necessarily joined in one concept. The two laws, as Derrida puts it, are at one and the same time, heterogeneous and indissociable.<sup>803</sup> They are heterogeneous because they are mutually antagonistic; one always seeks to displace the other. Conditional hospitality denies the *possibility* and *utility* of the unconditional; unconditional hospitality denies that the conditional *is* hospitality. As heterogeneous,

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<sup>801</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>802</sup> Samuel Butler, quoted in Patten, *Not Quite the Diplomat*, p. 127.

<sup>803</sup> Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, p. 27.



movement from one to the other is not possible without an “absolute leap.”<sup>804</sup> But they are also indissociable, as,

I cannot open the door, I cannot expose myself to the coming of the other and offer him or her anything whatsoever without making this hospitality effective, without, in some concrete way, giving *something determinate*. This determination will thus have to reinscribe the unconditional into certain conditions. Otherwise it gives nothing. What remains unconditional or absolute... risks being nothing at all if conditions... do not make of it some thing.<sup>805</sup>

Just as the laws need *the* law, and politics needs absolute hospitality, so *the* law of absolute hospitality *needs* politics and laws of conditional hospitality. One can see the irony in a concept of absolute hospitality *giving nothing*, thus it requires a reference to its bastardized form which gives concretely – *if never giving enough*. Nonetheless, despite this indissociability the necessary heterogeneity remains. One does not nullify the other. They are both true, at the same moment. Hence the hostility contained within the conditional laws, and the hospitality contained in *the* unconditional law of hospitality are one and the same. This is why Derrida coins the term *hostipitality* to reveal the way hostility and hospitality are joined within the same undecidable (un)ethical concept.<sup>806</sup>

Consequently, using Derrida’s analysis we can see why there is confusion over whether the EU’s foreign policy towards the Balkans is still hospitable and, as such, ethical. A close reading of hospitality reveals the way it both enables and disables *itself*. It is enabled as the two laws work together indissociably, but it disables as their heterogeneity means they work against each other. It is important to note, however, that while the policy towards the Balkans reveals this problem it is no less a constitutive part of the hospitality shown towards Central and Eastern European countries through enlargement. Solana notes in early 2000 that although the EU has a “political and moral responsibility” to support the countries that will accede four years later, the EU should

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<sup>804</sup> Derrida, “Autoimmunity”, p. 129.

<sup>805</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>806</sup> See Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, translated by Gil Anidjar (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 356-420.



nonetheless not weaken its criteria or the standards they must reach for membership.<sup>807</sup> It was because the conditions upon this hospitality were so strong that, despite enlargement being “priority number one for this Commission since its very beginnings [in 1999],”<sup>808</sup> it was only in 2004 that they gained entry to the European home.

The undecidable nature of hospitality, or *hostipitality*, is equally applicable to both the enlargement and Balkan foreign policies of the EU. Because the conditions set by the EU’s hospitality are contaminations on a pure concept, we can neither say that the hospitality offered by EU foreign policy is simply ethical or unethical. In making reference to the pure ethicality of hospitality they retain an ethical element. But the set conditions, the need to have entrenched democracy, human rights, free markets and the rule of law, the need to answer over 2,500 questions, remain *contaminations* on this pure ethicality and, in this sense, *unethical*. Thus, both the enlargement and Balkan policies can only be seen as both hospitable *and* inhospitable, inclusive *and* exclusive, ethical *and* unethical, and yet neither one nor the other at the same time. The hospitality, and thus ethics, of EU foreign policy is inherently *undecidable*. There is one other EU foreign policy however, yet to be discussed, which contains a reference to ethics as hospitality. This variously conceived ‘Proximity,’ or ‘Neighbourhood,’ policy raises even greater problems with the possibility of a simply ethical foreign policy based on hospitality.

### ***Deconstructing the European Home: The ENP***

The argument that has been made relies heavily on the idea that hospitality requires some notion of an ‘at-home’ for its possible performance. As shown in section one, without the home there can be no possibility of hospitality. While the home can be a way to close off the outside, to exclude, it is also the very “condition of openness, of

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<sup>807</sup> Javier Solana, Speech to the European Parliament, 1 March 2000.

<sup>808</sup> Romano Prodi, Speech to the European Parliament on Enlargement, Strasbourg, 13 November 2001.



hospitality, and of the door”.<sup>809</sup> Yet this key point is far from simple. To leave the matter here would be to ignore the further aporias and contradictions within the concept of hospitality, contradictions which deconstruct the very possibility of the home. This section examines the third key EU foreign policy with an ethical dimension – the neighbourhood policy – and shows how it problematises and deconstructs the very possibility of the European ‘home’. While the two laws of hospitality problematise the possibility of a simply ethical or hospitable foreign policy, this deconstruction problematises the very basis of hospitality itself: the home. As such it is also a deconstruction of the EU’s subjectivity.

### *The ENP: Excluding/Including the ‘Friend’*

While the previous two EU foreign policies discussed have been explicitly hospitable, with varying degrees of conditionality, this section discusses a sometimes explicitly *inhospitable* policy. It is argued, however, that the EU’s policy towards its ‘neighbourhood’ retains a reference to hospitality, and more importantly describes the *limits* of its hospitality. This reference to hospitality means that what becomes the ENP is still considered ethical in its intent in the EU discourse. However, the limits it places on hospitality, and the way the policy is described, reveals even more starkly the inseparability of hospitality and hostility – the undecidability of hospitality as *hostipitality*.

As early as 1999, Prodi was stressing the importance of working with the EU’s Eastern and Southern “neighbours” to produce peace, stability and prosperity: a “new European order”.<sup>810</sup> The aim of this cooperation with the “new neighbours” the EU has gained from enlargement is also, however, “to spread our ethical and political values through the wider Europe”.<sup>811</sup> One impulse for the future ENP is represented as the desire to

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<sup>809</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 81.

<sup>810</sup> Romano Prodi, “My Vision of Europe”, Lecture to Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University, Ottawa, 16 December 1999.

<sup>811</sup> Romano Prodi, Speech to the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, Bilbao, 28 April 2000.



spread the values of the EU, the principles of the European home/family. In this sense, it could potentially be seen as hospitable. However, the other key impulse is the desire to stop enlargement, to prevent more hospitality, to close off the European home and preserve its integrity. This latter representation comes to the fore towards the end of 2002 as Prodi sets out the initial reasoning for a new “neighbourhood” policy:

When we look to the East and the South, it is very difficult to make out the new frontiers of Europe. This, of course, is nothing new: it has been hard to decide where Europe ends in these two compass directions for thousands of years. However, this does not mean that we can just keep on enlarging Europe. The cost would be too great, since it would effectively mean abandoning the European political project. At the same time we cannot draw a neat demarcation line, as some Mediterranean countries – Malta and Cyprus – are preparing to become members of the Union, others, Turkey are candidates for membership, and all are linked to Europe by ties of tradition, special situations and interests.<sup>812</sup>

While this foreign policy goes through various names (the “Wider Europe” initiative,<sup>813</sup> the “Proximity Policy”<sup>814</sup>), in January of 2004 Prodi announces the new ENP, a “partnership based on shared values and enhancing economic development, interdependence and cultural links *for those neighbours for which accession is not on the agenda*”.<sup>815</sup> In other words, the ENP is about extending, or offering *something* to those that are excluded from the European home.

In his memoirs Patten translates this policy into the spatial metaphors he uses so well.

So, if we can persuade our citizens that enlargement should continue, where do we tell them that it should stop? Do we simply continue adding rings of friends and neighbours until we get to the Caspian Sea or the Pacific? What do we say when Israel, Iraq or even Azerbaijan come knocking on the door? Plainly there has to be an end to the process somewhere, and we have tried to put it firmly in place with a so-called Neighbourhood Policy... These agreements offer the countries that are parties to them a share in our market and in some of our policies... in return for

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<sup>812</sup> Romano Prodi, “Europe and the Mediterranean: time for action”, Speech at Universite Catholique de Louvain-la-Neuve, 26 November 2002.

<sup>813</sup> Prodi, “Looking ahead in transatlantic relations”.

<sup>814</sup> Prodi, “Sharing stability and prosperity”.

<sup>815</sup> Romano Prodi, Speech on visit to Bogazici University, Istanbul, 16 January 2004 – emphasis added.



implementing democratic and economic reforms. But membership of the EU is not on the table. *Our partners are welcome to set up their stall in the marketplace, but not to set foot in the town hall.*<sup>816</sup>

The spatial metaphor is once again revealing in illustrating how the ENP fits into the EU's hospitable foreign policy. When Israel, Iraq or Azerbaijan come knocking, the aim is to be able to answer them (though why the emphasis on 'even' Azerbaijan is somewhat puzzling). And the answer, this sharing of 'everything except institutions', means that these neighbours can make the most of EU values, prosperity and stability, *but* only come as far as the 'marketplace'. They are barred from the centre of the European home, the 'town hall'.

The way the ENP is represented by Prodi recalls the 'road-bound' policies towards the Balkans presented earlier in the period under study. Prodi gives three almost identical speeches in September 2004 to students and 'representatives of civil society' in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia summing up the benefits of the ENP. For example, in Azerbaijan he claims that "[b]y promoting democracy, the rule of law, human rights, the market economy and conflict settlement, the ENP will help to improve life for Azerbaijanis".<sup>817</sup> Yet, he says, the provision of such help will "require Azerbaijan to demonstrate it shares values with the Union in practice as well as in principle... You will not be surprised that our assistance will be conditional."<sup>818</sup> Just as the Balkans had to demonstrate that they shared European values, that they were capable of reforms on democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the market economy, so it is with Azerbaijan and neighbouring countries.

It is important, declares Prodi, that the EU plays its part in this cooperation. But "ultimately, Azerbaijan's future relationship with the European Union and Azerbaijan's

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<sup>816</sup> Patten, *Not Quite the Diplomat*, p. 142 – emphasis in original.

<sup>817</sup> Romano Prodi, Meeting with students of Baku State University, Azerbaijan, 17 September, 2004 – essentially the same speech as: Romano Prodi, To students and representatives of civil society in Georgia, Tbilisi University, 18 September 2004; Romano Prodi, To students and representatives of civil society in Armenia, European Regional Institute of Information and Communication Technologies, Yerevan, 19 September 2004.

<sup>818</sup> Prodi, Meeting with students of Baku State University.



own future will depend on you yourselves – on your own determination to make your country work”.<sup>819</sup> In another repetition of the Balkans policy, we can see that the responsibility for EU hospitality is shifted to the neighbouring countries themselves. Now it is ‘ultimately’ Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia’s responsibility to meet the conditions of EU’s hospitality. Neighbouring countries, in an almost identical way to the Balkans, are being offered a limited form of hospitality on the understanding that they first become *like* the EU, that they cease to be other and become the same, even if these countries *do not get the same* in return as the Balkans.

Yet, while the stable representation of the policy towards the end of 2004 is interesting, what is crucial to this discussion of hospitality is the way it is spoken of during its development. In 2002, Prodi talks about a “duty” to formulate a clear response to other countries’ expectations, to find a new system of relations between the enlarged EU and “an encircling band of friendly countries stretching from the Maghreb to Russia.”<sup>820</sup> But firstly, there is need to answer the question, “[w]here *does Europe stop?*”<sup>821</sup> This is explicitly not about separating countries, “[w]e want to tear down old divisions – *to integrate, not separate.*”<sup>822</sup> This gives the policy its reference to hospitality. Yet, limiting this hospitality, he repeats that, “clearly we cannot keep on enlarging the Union indefinitely... We need to maintain the EU’s *internal equilibrium and cohesiveness*” and retain the EU’s capacity “to act on its basis of shared values and objectives”.<sup>823</sup> In other words, they must maintain the integrity of the European home, based on what he calls a “broader idea of ‘*belonging*’”.<sup>824</sup> Thus, Prodi calls for a framework of cooperation with the EU’s neighbours, “where we share everything but *institutions*”.<sup>825</sup>

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<sup>819</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>820</sup> Romano Prodi, “Europe in transition: hopes and fears”, Speech at Fifth Europa Forum: “Europe facing the decision – EU Enlargement and Global Challenges”, Brussels, 3 December 2002.

<sup>821</sup> *Ibid.* – emphasis in original.

<sup>822</sup> *Ibid.* – emphasis in original.

<sup>823</sup> *Ibid.* – emphasis in original.

<sup>824</sup> *Ibid.* – emphasis in original.

<sup>825</sup> *Ibid.* – emphasis in original.



These themes of the ‘ring of friends’, as opposed to *family*, and the sharing of ‘everything but institutions’ are repeated over and again.<sup>826</sup> Prodi justifies this limited hospitality in various ways which all come back to the same theme: continued enlargement would risk “water[ing] down the European political project and turn[ing] the European Union into just a free trade area on a continental scale”.<sup>827</sup> While this *is* exclusionary, it is, as has been stated, crucial to hospitality. If the European home was ‘watered down’ and became just a free trade area, it would no longer *be* the European home discussed in section two: an area of shared ethical and political values. And if there was no home, then *there could be no hospitality*. As well as being about openness, hospitality presupposes what Derrida calls this “possibility of a rigorous delimitation of thresholds or frontiers”,<sup>828</sup> a separation from otherness.<sup>829</sup> The policy of the ENP shows precisely the inseparability of hospitality and *hostility* shown earlier. The delimitation of borders, the cordoning off of the European home is both crucial to hospitality *and* a violent, hostile exclusion. The ENP then, in a similar yet different way to the enlargement and Balkan foreign policies, can only ever be undecidable: *both* ethical *and* unethical, as well as *neither* ethical, *nor* unethical.

### *Deconstructing the European Home*

While this hostile, exclusionary aspect is more explicit and acknowledged than in the policy towards the Balkans, it is also clear that there is discomfort surrounding it. The ENP is considered to be about tearing down divisions, integrating rather than separating. Hostility and hospitality are continually mentioned together, yet the hospitable aspect is stressed as if to try and convince neighbouring countries that the policy is not hostile. In a speech tackling the subject of where ‘Europe’ ends, Solana emphasizes that, while “[a]ll roads should not lead to Brussels”, the EU’s new “borders

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<sup>826</sup> A few examples include, Prodi, “A Wider Europe – A Proximity Policy as the key to stability”; Prodi, “Looking ahead in transatlantic relations”; Prodi, “Sharing stability and prosperity”.

<sup>827</sup> Prodi, “A Wider Europe – A Proximity Policy as the key to stability”.

<sup>828</sup> Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, pp. 47-49.

<sup>829</sup> Derrida, *Adieu*, p. 92.



must be lines that connect not lines that divide”.<sup>830</sup> The difficulty of drawing these lines in relation to the ENP, however, reveals a further aporia of hospitality which has not thus far been mentioned. This aporia goes to the very heart of the EU’s ethical, hospitable foreign policy, undermining the possibility of the European home itself.

In his memoirs, Patten warns that while the ENP is “an imaginative try” at solving the question about where to draw the line around the European home, two events will make it difficult to “hold the line”.<sup>831</sup> These are the agreement with Turkey to begin accession negotiations and the Ukrainian Orange Revolution (when Ukrainian citizens forced the state to award the election to a pro-European candidate after initially undemocratically appointing a pro-Russian). Patten recounts how, in his first meeting with a foreign minister from the Ukraine in 1999, he was asked why Turkey was seen as a European country and Ukraine was not.

What, he [the Ukrainian foreign minister] asked, was so special about Turkey’s European vocation and so deficient about Ukraine’s? I stumbled through an unconvincing answer, one that convinced me even less in retrospect when I discovered that two of my officials present at the meeting had parents who had been born and worked in what is now Ukraine, but which then had different borders.<sup>832</sup>

It is revealing that Patten finds it difficult to respond convincingly to the question, but the most interesting aspect of Patten’s story is the presence of two EU foreign policy officials who have Ukrainian parents. As we have seen, the integrity of the ‘home’ is based upon the ability to draw lines and delimit otherness. Yet in the act of drawing this line, Patten reveals that the other is already inside. The Ukraine is clearly represented as the other, a ‘friend’ and ‘neighbour’ to the EU as opposed to being part of the ‘family’ or in the EU ‘home.’ Yet, as this line is drawn, as a clear threshold to the home is delimited, the friend is revealed to be *already family*, the neighbour *already in the home*.

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<sup>830</sup> Javier Solana, “The Limits of Integration – Where Does the European Union End?” Address to the Europa Forum, Vienna, 19 November 2004.

<sup>831</sup> Patten, *Not Quite the Diplomat*, pp. 142-143.

<sup>832</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.



This raises profound questions about the possibility of demarcating a ‘home’ in the first place. Yet these questions are not merely specific to EU foreign policy. Derrida observes that they are already installed in the language of hospitable discourse itself. In French, the subject of hospitality is the *hôte*, which means both ‘host’ and ‘guest’. Literally, the *hôte* is both the giver and receiver of hospitality. To translate it as either simply one or the other, either ‘host’ or ‘guest,’ is impossible. The *hôte*, as host, is the subject that welcomes the *hôte*, as guest; but the *hôte* is both at the same time.<sup>833</sup>

Such a point could merely be dismissed as one of translation; a problem created by the vagaries of the French language.<sup>834</sup> Yet we can see its operation in the above example of the Ukraine taken from the EU foreign policy discourse. The EU is the ‘host’ and the Ukraine the potential ‘guest’, which the EU is granting a highly circumscribed form of hospitality through the ENP. But the Ukrainian foreign minister questions this status, suggesting that the Ukrainian ‘European vocation’ is far from deficient – perhaps Ukrainians are better considered a ‘host’? To allow the operation of hospitality, however, Patten must assert the thresholds and boundaries of the home, and the difference between ‘guest’ and ‘host’. Yet the subject of hospitality as *hôte* reasserts itself in his realisation that his officials are Ukrainian. Discomfort is brought about by the fact that the EU finds itself to be also the ‘guest’ of the ‘host’, the Ukrainians, within what it thought was its own, common European home.

Up to this point the critique has mainly surrounded precisely this limited form of hospitality that the EU enacts. The only argument against an unconditional form of hospitality is that we cannot organise it, or derive a politics from it.<sup>835</sup> Yet this problem of the *hôte* applies even more strongly to absolute, unconditional hospitality, which every hospitality (including that offered in the enlargement, Balkan and neighbourhood policies) which deserves the name must refer to. As outlined above, this means giving place to the other in our own home. This is not simply a matter of allowing them to

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<sup>833</sup> Derrida, *Adieu*, pp. 41-2.

<sup>834</sup> This is not easy, however, because the term ‘hospitality’ in English derives from the Latin *hospitalarius* via the Old French, *hospitalite*. If this dual meaning is constitutive of the subject of French *hospitalite* then it also constitutes the English subject of *hospitality*. Persall (ed.), *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, p. 687.

<sup>835</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 17.



occupy part of our home, giving them shelter and asking no questions, but it literally means that the other *takes our place*. If they take our place then we are no longer in the simple position of host. Indeed, effectively, the positions have been reversed – we are now a guest.

In this way, our home is no longer simply ‘ours’; hospitality makes us, as host (*hôte*), literally a guest (*hôte*) in our own home. My home then is only ‘mine’ in so much as it is also the other’s. The question of hospitality is no longer just about us giving hospitality to the other, it is about hospitality being granted to ourselves in our own ‘at-home’, which is always the home of the other.<sup>836</sup> In a supplementary irony then, though the home is a prerequisite for hospitality, hospitality itself makes the very concept of the ‘at-home’ impossible. As Derrida says, hospitality “is a name or an example of deconstruction. Of the deconstruction of the concept, of the concept of the concept, as well as of its construction, its home, its ‘at-home.’ Hospitality is the deconstruction of the at-home”.<sup>837</sup>

In other words, the unconditional form of hospitality, which EU hospitality must retain a reference to for it to be conceived as in any way ethical, undermines the very possibility of the home: the condition of hospitality itself. The European home, as discussed in section one, is both fundamental to the operation of hospitality, and yet is also disabled *by this very hospitality*. Importantly, this deconstruction and putting into question of the possibility of the self and the home cannot be felt as benign. When these fundamental aspects of our identity are put into question, invaded by others, hospitality can only be felt as a radical form of persecution. As such, the subject of hospitality, the *hôte*, is not only both host and guest, but both are also *hostage*.<sup>838</sup> Our home is no longer where we can relax, feel free to be ourselves, but where we are persecuted. It is no longer our space, indeed it never was, but rather the space of the other. The other can arrive at any time, without invitation, and take what he likes in our place. The ‘at-home’ becomes where we are held hostage. But this is the case for everyone: the structure of substitution,

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<sup>836</sup> Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, p. 99.

<sup>837</sup> Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, p. 364.

<sup>838</sup> Derrida, *Adieu*, p. 56.



where everyone is *hôte*, as guest and host, “make[s] everyone into everyone else’s hostage”.<sup>839</sup>

As has been demonstrated, hospitality cannot be separated from hostility, but now we can see that this is true for both its conditional *and unconditional* forms. In a conditional form of hospitality such as that of enlargement, the necessary filtering and choosing (of who and what is included) necessitates a violent exclusion of the other. This exclusion occurs on a spectrum from those geographically distant (such as Latin America and Asia, who are absolutely excluded), to neighbourhood countries (who are largely excluded), to the Balkans (who are excluded until they stop being other and become the same). Thus, in what may appear the ethical concept *par excellence*, hostility, violence and injustice are inevitably installed.<sup>840</sup> For unconditional hospitality the hostility is even more extreme, however. After all, our very sense of self, our subjectivity, our being-as-we-are, is persecuted, questioned and occupied. Hence, even unconditional hospitality is always already *hostipitality*. That which we have conceived as coextensive with the ethical relation to the other, *is* hostile and unethical. EU policies, even those such as enlargement that are *more* hospitable, cannot be anything but *hostile*. Enlargement, whatever the conditions or lack thereof that it sets, will inevitably fall into the ethical undecidability of *hostipitality*.

What is most important about unconditional *hostipitality*, however, is that it deconstructs the possibility of the home and thus the subjectivity of the EU. As demonstrated in section one, the EU conceives its home as a place of shared ethical and political values. As such, it seeks to keep countries such as the Ukraine outside the European home, because it is not seen as representing those values. Yet the ENP reveals that, contrary to its intention, hospitality has already been offered and accepted. The Ukraine is already in the home, it is already part of the family. This is demonstrated both by the Orange Revolution, which Patten sees as demonstrating its European-ness,<sup>841</sup> but also by the presence of Ukrainians within the institutions of the European home. The outside is

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<sup>839</sup> Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, p. 125.

<sup>840</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>841</sup> Patten, *Not Quite the Diplomat*, p. 143.



therefore already a constitutive part of the inside, and the delimitation of frontiers which are so crucial to the possibility of the home (and thus hospitality) is always already impossible.

## ***Conclusion***

This chapter explored how ‘hospitality,’ as the dominant enactment of the ethical in EU foreign policy, serves to undermine both its own ethicality, and the subjectivity of the EU as an international actor. As such it has drawn out many of the themes of Chapters III (on subjectivity) and IV (on responsibility). Rather than using an external definition of ethics to critique the way the EU has enacted its foreign policy, the way the EU discourse itself conceives and represents ethics has been the focus of the analysis, demonstrating how this deconstructs without any external aid.

The first section examined the way that, like British foreign policy, the EU discourse bases its ethics on a responsibility to protect and save human life. However, unlike the British, the EU places greater stress on its responsibility to those countries and people which are geographically closer to Europe. Its idea of responsibility is based on a notion of proximity to the European ‘home’. The emphasis of the ethical is therefore that of a responsibility of hospitality: welcoming others into this ‘home.’ Such hospitality is considered ethical because of the way that the EU describes its ‘family’ or ‘home’: not just as a geographically bounded space, but as a community of shared ethical and political values. The European home conceived as a moral community means that the most ethical foreign policy is necessarily that of hospitably welcoming others inside. Such a bounded ‘home,’ delimited from otherness, is essential to the possibility of hospitality. Without the home, without something to welcome the other into, there is no way in which hospitality can be performed.

Section two analysed the two foreign policies which have been represented as the most hospitable, and thus the most ‘ethical’: enlargement and policy towards the Balkans. The



conditions placed upon the welcoming of both the Balkan countries *and* Central and Eastern European nations into the common European home revealed a problem for the discourse of hospitality. To probe this further required a reading of Derrida's two laws of hospitality: the conditional and the unconditional. While the conditional hospitality offered by the EU retains a reference to ethics, such conditions are also contaminations upon the purely ethical, unconditional hospitality. Hospitality is, in this sense, divided against itself and as such, any conditional policy deriving from it can only ever be undecidable, both hospitable *and* hostile, ethical *and* unethical, yet being neither one nor the other at the same time.

Section three expanded upon this dual nature of hospitality (as both hostile and hospitable) through the third EU foreign policy examined: the ENP. While this policy is exclusionary and hostile, such exclusion is essential to the very possibility of the home; and without the home there can be no hospitality. However, when the ENP is justified to the EU's neighbours, the possibility of delimiting the home is revealed as impossible. The exclusion of the Ukraine from the EU is shown to be both problematic in the EU's terms (because of its European-ness), and already not the case. The Ukraine already constitutes the European 'home' through the presence of Ukrainian officials in the EU's institutional structures.

This reveals the hostility contained also within absolute hospitality. The unconditional welcoming of the other into our home means that the home is no longer simply ours. It is also the others, and the place where our subjectivity is held hostage and questioned by the other. The EU is therefore both host and guest within its own home. The presence of the outside within the EU calls the very subjectivity of the EU into question; it is not what it claims to be. Its subjectivity is already held hostage by the other. The chapter thereby completes its circuitous route back to the home. While the demarcation of the home from otherness is fundamental to the possibility of hospitality, hospitality also deconstructs this home, showing that it can never be ultimately 'ours'. The very *possibility* of hospitality is undecidably both possible and impossible, hostile and



hospitable, ethical and unethical, responsible and irresponsible, but neither simply one nor the other of these terms.

Chapters III, IV and V have deconstructed three crucial elements of the ‘ethical’ in British and EU foreign policy: subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality. The representation of each, however, deconstructs and undermines itself, revealing its constitutive undecidability. The subject is always an object, responsibility is always irresponsible, hospitality forever a hostility. But where do we go from here? Does Derridean deconstruction leave us in a moral wasteland where all ethical action is fundamentally impossible? Should we abandon or ignore possibilities for ethics in foreign policy, like most FPA, because it has shown itself to be an unachievable goal? The next chapter outlines how the aporetic undecidability of the ethical can prove to be *enabling* rather than simply *disabling*. Through the Derridean concept of ‘negotiation’ we can *and must* retain the ethical (as well as a certain subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality) through what Shapiro calls a “degree of unreading, unmapping, and rewriting”<sup>842</sup> of the foreign policy text.

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<sup>842</sup> Shapiro, “The Ethics of Encounter”, p. 77.



## *Chapter VI*

### *Negotiation: Invention and Im-Possibility*

#### *Introduction*

The previous three chapters have not only ascertained the importance of three concepts for ethics and foreign policy (subjectivity, responsibility, hospitality), but have also deconstructed the way they are used in the foreign policy texts of Britain and the EU. This deconstruction means that while a subject (a ‘Britain’ and an ‘EU’), a responsibility (to ‘protect’ and ‘save’) and a hospitality (based on ‘home’ and ‘family’) have all been declared, what has been described in these foreign policies is the impossibility of a simple subject, responsibility and hospitality. The undecidability of these concepts has been described, and with it the undecidability of ethics and foreign policy.

This chapter asks ‘where do we go from here?’ There are two obvious responses to the antinomies of ethical concepts: either acknowledging them and resolving that a foreign policy involving ethics is *impossible*; or, ignoring the contradictions and paradoxes and acting *as if* we know who/what ‘we’ ‘are’, what responsibility and hospitality mean and how they can be enacted. Both these responses are rejected as *fundamentally* unethical: the first because it acknowledges itself as such; the second because, as Derrida says of responsibility, any inadequate thematisation of the ethical is itself an irresponsible, unethical thematisation.<sup>843</sup> It mischaracterises and misleads, it allows one to *think* one has acted responsibly when the opposite is true, and limits our awareness of other, more responsible, possibilities. But what other response, what other solution, is there for the undecidability of ethics and foreign policy?

While this chapter does not propose a solution, it does seek to *move forward*. This movement forward cannot be conceived teleologically and thus would be better

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<sup>843</sup> Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, p. 25.



described as a problematic and contingent *movement through* the paradoxes of ethics in foreign policy, rather than a movement *toward* a fully ethical foreign policy. This *movement through* is made possible by introducing the Derridean concept of *negotiation*. This is not ‘negotiation’ as traditionally understood. As Derrida makes clear, it does not “imply a diplomatic operation that takes place in political-institutional contexts. It is an operation that takes place in every sentence: no, in every word, practically, that I publish.”<sup>844</sup>

This negotiation operates between the poles of contradiction within a concept (such as unconditional and conditional hospitality). It does not seek to dialectically *resolve* these contradictions as, for instance, the laws of hospitality cannot be resolved in a third term, a *real* hospitality. The contradictions are interminable and there can be no simple ‘third way’ or ‘middle ground.’ Rather, negotiation suggests the possibility of particular context-specific decisions. These are taken without *renouncing* either of the poles of a contradiction – the unconditional or conditional, the incalculable or calculation – but without merely *following* either. As such, negotiation makes no claims to achieving an ethical foreign policy, it cannot produce a responsible relation to otherness, but rather opens the *possibility* of a movement through the logical contradictions of ethics and foreign policy.

This movement *through* must, of necessity, remain irresolvably problematic and subject to perpetual re-negotiation. In other words, this movement must maintain the *undecidability* of the problem, as this is the condition of ethical and political responsibility as well as the decision itself.<sup>845</sup> In this way, the possibility of negotiation is not that of an ethical foreign policy but an *ethico-political foreign policy*. Instead of resting on *an* ethics or *an* ethical, negotiation keeps ethics always political, always open to question. As such, it retains openness to the unexpected and unanticipatable arrival of the other, the possibility of the impossible ethical foreign policy. This is why negotiation is central to the thesis: rather than abandoning ethics and foreign policy or simply

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<sup>844</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 25.

<sup>845</sup> Derrida, *Limited Inc*, p. 116.



denying its antimonies, negotiation provides the *possibility* of a movement through them. As such, permanent deconstructive negotiation is anything but fatalistic or anti-ethical.

The chapter proceeds in section one by setting out some problems associated with a deconstructive ethics. Using the notion of 'aporia' deconstruction can be read as merely revealing ethical and political paradoxes in which language situates us, without providing the tools to extricate ourselves from them. This is refuted using Derrida's work on the law and justice to demonstrate that, as he puts it, "incalculable justice *requires* us to calculate".<sup>846</sup> The only guide to such a calculation, however, must be a problematic openness to the future and otherness that may bring a hyperbolic idea of justice. The concept of negotiation is suggestive of how such a calculation of the incalculable could take place. Four of its implications are drawn out in section two. Finally, in section three, this analysis of negotiation furthers a discussion of the three undecidably un-ethical concepts key to ethics and foreign policy: subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality.

The structure of this chapter may suggest the establishment of an ethical rule followed by its application to foreign policy, similar to much extant literature on ethics and foreign policy discussed in the Introduction to this thesis. The separation of these areas (ethics and foreign policy), however, will be problematised by the very concept and practice of negotiation, which can only ever be an invention within a specific context. An unproblematic application of negotiation to each of the concepts examined here is impossible. The goal is not to affirm *a* subject, *a* responsibility, *a* hospitality, or *an* ethics. Rather it is to show how a negotiating ethico-political foreign policy, while necessarily closing with each decision, can leave itself as open as possible to the impossible *arrivance* of the ethical.

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<sup>846</sup> Derrida, "Force of Law", p. 28.



## *A Derridean Ethics?*

Approaching Derrida as a philosopher of ethics in an unproblematic manner would be a mistake. We are warned against this approach by Derrida himself. He notes that an attempt to “remoralize deconstruction... at each moment risks reassuring itself in order to reassure the other and to promote the consensus of a new dogmatic slumber”.<sup>847</sup> This warning must be considered throughout the chapter as it becomes clear that no assurance can be found. The first section outlines an important critique of the way deconstruction potentially disallows the possibility of political and ethical judgement. Drawing upon Derrida’s writing on a justice beyond law and right, the poverty of this critique is revealed.

### *Critiques and Calculation*

There are certainly better and worse critiques of Derrida’s ‘ethics.’ An example of the worse would be Mary Warnock, who labels deconstruction “irresponsible”, an “absurd and esoteric” doctrine with “a creeping and insidious effect” upon ethics.<sup>848</sup> All of this is stated without a single supporting quotation from Derrida’s work, or indeed any evidence that Derrida’s work has been read; an approach to ‘continental’ thinkers which is all too common in the English-speaking ‘analytical’ school of philosophy.<sup>849</sup>

Perhaps the best critique is that deconstruction reveals logical contradictions, *without showing a way to resolve them*.<sup>850</sup> The previous three chapters demonstrated how the concepts of subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality are marked by the logical

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<sup>847</sup> Jacques Derrida, “Passions: ‘An Oblique Offering’”, in David Wood (ed.), *Derrida: A Critical Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp. 13-14.

<sup>848</sup> Warnock, *An Intelligent Person’s Guide to Ethics*, pp. 166-169.

<sup>849</sup> For a useful critique of ‘analytical’ philosophy’s marginalisation of the ‘continental’ see Simon Glendinning, “The Ethics of Exclusion: Incorporating the Continent”, in Kearney and Dooley (eds.), *Questioning Ethics*, pp. 120-131.

<sup>850</sup> See, for example, Peter Dews, *Logics of Disintegration: Poststructuralism and the Claims of Critical Theory* (London: Verso, 1987). I focus on the similar, though more sophisticated arguments of Critchley, *The Ethics of Deconstruction*.



undecidability of what Derrida calls the *aporia*. Deriving from the Greek word *aporos* (meaning ‘impassable’) an aporia is an irresolvable contradiction internal to a text or argument, a path that is blocked, the “impossible passage, the refused, denied, or prohibited passage”.<sup>851</sup>

Aporia then, is precisely what this thesis has revealed as the undecidability of ethics and foreign policy. Subjectivity cannot be definitively established. The subject of ethics and foreign policy (that which can take responsibility) is always already contaminated by the object (that which is incapable of taking responsibility), subjectivity cannot be placed on firm ground (Chapter III). Responsibility, whether to protect or save, is marked by a contaminating irresponsibility as we must always *choose* who to (responsibly) protect and save, and who to (irresponsibly) abandon and sacrifice. Even those who we choose to (responsibly) save are, as such, (irresponsibly) marked out as deficient objects (Chapter IV). Hospitality is always already marked by hostility as those we (hospitably) allow to enter our home are faced with (hostile) questions and conditions. Even an unconditional hospitality (hospitably) opens our home to the other such that it is (hostilely) no longer our home (Chapter V).

These logical contradictions make ethical concepts undecidable aporias; impassable blocks to the possibility of ethical foreign policy. For Simon Critchley then, Derrida leaves us in an “impasse of the political”, which deconstruction provides no way out of.<sup>852</sup> “The rigorous undecidability of deconstructive reading fails to account for the activity of political judgement, political critique, and the political decision”.<sup>853</sup> While a cogent critique, Critchley is relying upon a particularly narrow conception of the ‘political’. For Derrida, there is no possibility of politics, ethics or the decision *without* undecidability: “a certain undecidability is the condition or the opening of a space for an ethical or political decision, and not the opposite”.<sup>854</sup>

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<sup>851</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Aporias*, translated by Thomas Dutoit (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 8.

<sup>852</sup> Critchley, *The Ethics of Deconstruction*, pp. 189-190.

<sup>853</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>854</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 298.



If the decision were decidable, whether through the application of a rule, or on the basis of the knowledge we have of a situation, we would no longer take the decision; it would be already made and the decision becomes “nothing but the mechanical application of a rule”.<sup>855</sup> Thus, for Derrida *contra* Critchley, “[e]thics and politics, therefore, start with undecidability.”<sup>856</sup> They can only begin when “I am in front of a problem and I know that the two determined solutions are as justified as one another. From that point I have to take responsibility which is heterogeneous to knowledge.”<sup>857</sup> While this is crucial, to a certain extent it fails to answer Critchley’s critique. If *undecidability* is the condition of the ethico-political decision, how are we to decide? Surely, the ethical and political necessity of preserving undecidability means that there can be no decision as this would *end* undecidability?

As Campbell points out,<sup>858</sup> Derrida engages precisely this issue in his discussion of a justice beyond law. Justice is separated from the law in the same way as unconditional hospitality is separated from its conditional form; or absolute responsibility to all others is separated from a legal, or moral, responsibility to *an* other. These concepts are entirely heterogeneous, yet they are also indissociable as law, responsibility and hospitality must retain a reference to justice, responsibility and hospitality to keep their name. The unconditional requires conditions to be able to *give* anything at all. Thus, an analysis of justice and law is also applicable to the problems of responsibility and hospitality.

Crucially, this aporetic heterogeneity and indissociability, Derrida argues, “cannot and should not serve as an alibi for staying out of juridico-political battles”.<sup>859</sup> The reasoning for this is vital and worth quoting and length.

Left to itself the incalculable and giving idea of justice is always very close to the bad, even to the worst for it can always be reappropriated by the most perverse calculation. It’s always possible. And so incalculable justice *requires* us to calculate... [In the juridical] but also in all the fields

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<sup>855</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 232.

<sup>856</sup> Derrida, “Hospitality, Justice and Responsibility”, p. 66.

<sup>857</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>858</sup> Campbell, “The Deterritorialization of Responsibility”, p. 44.

<sup>859</sup> Derrida, “Force of Law”, p. 28.



from which we cannot separate it, which intervene in it and are no longer simply fields: ethics, politics, economics, psycho-sociology, philosophy, literature, etc. Not only *must* we calculate, negotiate the relation between the calculable and the incalculable, and negotiation without the sort of rule that wouldn't have to be reinvented there where we are cast, there where we find ourselves; but we *must* take it as far as possible, beyond the place we find ourselves and beyond the already identifiable zones of morality or politics or law... This requirement does not properly belong either to justice or law. It only belongs to either of these two domains by exceeding each one in the direction of the other.<sup>860</sup>

The most important stipulation here is that an incalculable concept of justice *requires one to calculate*. Rather than allowing us to stay out of political battles because of the incalculability of ethical concepts, this very incalculability in fact gives us a duty to get involved, to calculate a response, to *make a decision*. This requirement is not entirely a revelation as the very indissociability of justice and law, responsibility to *an* other and *all* others, *the* law and the laws of hospitality, demands that they *give something* as concepts. While they remain heterogeneous, their indissociability *demand*s such a calculation.

Yet how are we to calculate what is incalculable? This is where the concept of negotiation becomes central. As Derrida says in the quotation above, the relation between the incalculable and the calculable must be *negotiated*. The need for this calculation is *a dual duty requiring both openness to the future and the avoidance of the worst*. This is the essentially nonfoundational founding for calculation and *negotiation*. Such a problematic 'nonfoundation', however, requires much greater explanation before we go any further with the concept of negotiation as a way of *moving through* undecidability. An outline of each duty is given, beginning with 'openness to the future'.

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<sup>860</sup> *Ibid.*



### *First Duty of Calculation: Openness and the Future-to-Come*

The future, as ‘future-to-come,’ is as difficult a concept to grasp as its importance is difficult to overstate. In one interview Derrida declares, “[i]t’s better to let the future open – this is the axiom of deconstruction, the thing from which it always starts out and which binds it, like the future itself, to alterity.”<sup>861</sup> A responsibility, or unconditional duty to let the future open, to let the future as absolute other come, is as close as we get to a statement of what the ‘ethical’ *could be* for Derrida.

The temptation is to ask, ‘what *is* this future-to-come?’, ‘what is this other, this alterity, towards which we must remain open?’ Yet these are precisely the questions of presence, questions which call on the future to *present itself*, which are necessarily unanswerable.

The future-to-come, whose grammar is necessary here and imposes the very injunction of its ‘it is necessary,’ has precisely the impossible-to-anticipate figure of that which comes, which is coming, which remains to come. Irreducible to calculation, program, project, subject, object, and anticipation, what is coming can receive indifferently the names ‘event’ and ‘other.’ What remains to be thought remains to come and thus resists thinking. The word ‘thinking’ thus takes in, without being able to house or contain, this inappropriable resistance of the other.<sup>862</sup>

The ‘future-to-come’ is entirely beyond anticipation or apprehension. Like the incalculable concepts of justice, hospitality and responsibility it remains always to come and resistant of presence. We cannot name this future, we cannot predict it, we cannot anticipate it, as these would all seek to make it *present*. It must remain ‘to-come’ rather than simply being ‘future,’ precisely to differentiate it from what *will* come, what we know will arrive, what *will be present*.

A future-present, a future that will be present, is how we commonly understand the future. Derrida illustrates this using the weather. We do not know for sure whether tomorrow it will rain, but this does not make the coming of rain an event, a future-to-

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<sup>861</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 21.

<sup>862</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Without Alibi*, translated by Peggy Kamuf (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. xxxiii.



come.<sup>863</sup> We know what rain is, we know that it will possibly come, we can anticipate and expect its arrival, and we have experienced it before. It is a future-present, something that will be present in the future. Even if there is an interminable drought, all these things remain true of 'rain'. In contrast, they cannot be said of the *arrivant*, the absolute other, the future-to-come, of which we can know nothing, can expect nothing, and cannot have any experience. This future will always be an experience of the *perhaps*.<sup>864</sup> Here the word 'perhaps' is the best figure of the French *peut-être*, literally *peut* meaning 'can' or 'may', and *être*, to 'be'.<sup>865</sup> All concepts designated as being of this future-to-come (justice, responsibility, subjectivity, hospitality and the other) cannot simply *be*, but always *may be*.

Here we can see the first duty of calculating the incalculable: to let the future open, to leave ourselves open to the coming of the unanticipatable absolute other, *arrivant*, justice, ethics. This is *perhaps* given a less abstract formulation in *The Gift of Death*.<sup>866</sup> As discussed in Chapter IV, Abraham has a duty to the absolute other, God, who has told him to sacrifice his son Isaac. In sacrificing his son, Abraham is leaving himself open and acting responsibly towards the absolutely other, while closing and acting irresponsibly to his family.<sup>867</sup>

Derrida's reading is problematic in one sense because the absolute other, as future-to-come in the above formulation, *cannot be Abraham's God*. The God of the Old Testament is *not absolutely Other*. As with the example of rain, Abraham *knows something* of this God (even if there is much that cannot be understood), Abraham knows that he will *possibly come*, thus he can expect and anticipate his arrival. Though God is not a perfect future-present, neither is he an *absolute arrivant*. The knowledge and expectation that Abraham has of God problematises the *absolute otherness*, or *alterity*, or *arrivant-ness* of this God. Surely then, we cannot say that Abraham has an

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<sup>863</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 13.

<sup>864</sup> Derrida, *Without Alibi*, p. 235; see also Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning & the New International*, translated by Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 35.

<sup>865</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, translated by George Collins (London: Verso, 1997), p. 263.

<sup>866</sup> This was used in Chapter IV to analyse the possibility of responsibility in foreign policy.

<sup>867</sup> Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, pp. 66-67.



*absolute* duty or responsibility to God because God himself is not *absolutely* other as future-to-come?

There is some merit in this argument, though it is blunted by the reverse logic Derrida explicitly employs. He suggests that “[i]f God is completely other, the figure or name of the wholly other”, something we have reason to *dispute*, “then every other (one) is every (bit) other. *Tout autre est tout autre*.”<sup>868</sup> This implies that “God, as the wholly other, is to be found everywhere there is something of the wholly other,” as Derrida suggests.

And since each of us, everyone else, each other is infinitely other in its absolute singularity, inaccessible, solitary, transcendent, nonmanifest, originally nonpresent to my *ego*...then what can be said about Abraham’s relation to God can be said about my relation to *every other (one) as every (bit) other* [*tout autre comme tout autre*], in particular my relation to my neighbour or my loved ones who are as inaccessible, as secret and transcendent as Jahweh. Every other (in the sense of each other) is every bit other (absolutely other)... Through its [the story’s] paradox it speaks to the responsibility required at every moment for every man and every woman. At the same time, there is no longer any ethical generality that does not fall prey to the paradox of Abraham.<sup>869</sup>

Thus, while God is *not* as absolutely other as Derrida suggests, neither is he entirely accessible, knowable or devoid of secrecy. Derrida thus *reverses* the logic that was deconstructing his own deconstruction. Or, to put it more accurately, he further displaces the binary distinction between the wholly, or absolute other (God), and the knowable, accessible and predictable same (every other). Just as there is the knowable and accessible *same* in God, the apparently wholly other, Derrida shows that in every other’s unknowable and inaccessible singularity, there is the *absolutely other*. Therefore, if we have an absolute duty to be open to the future-to-come, to the absolutely other, we have an absolute responsibility to every other as wholly, or every bit, other. In other words, *there is something of the absolutely other in every other, thus we owe the same responsibility to every other as we do the absolutely other*.

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<sup>868</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 77-8.

<sup>869</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.



### *Second Duty of Calculation: Closure to the 'Worst'*

The analysis so far has revealed how an absolute, unconditional openness to the future-to-come or the wholly other can be an “axiom” of deconstruction.<sup>870</sup> The word “axiom” should of course be treated with extreme caution, more as a ‘something-like-axiom’ than simply an axiom. Yet this has still not accounted for the second prong of the dual duty to calculate the incalculable. The problem remains that, while we recognise the need for an openness toward the future-to-come and the absolutely other, if “every other (one) is every (bit) other”<sup>871</sup> then how do we choose which other to be most open towards? How do we remain open to the future-to-come and yet still enact a decision that *must close* towards a certain future so as to avoid the ‘worst’?<sup>872</sup>

The problem arises because openness to the future and the other, though an ‘axiom’ of deconstruction, is fundamentally dangerous;<sup>873</sup> it cannot be considered an *a priori* good thing. Unconditional openness to the future would give no possibility of preventing danger and thus could be considered reckless. However, in ‘Force of Law’ calculation is demanded by incalculable justice *precisely because* “[l]eft to itself the incalculable and giving idea of justice is always very close to the bad, even to the worst for it can always be reappropriated by the most perverse calculation.”<sup>874</sup> Leaving oneself open to the incalculable and unknowable ‘figure’ of the future, justice, *arrivant*, or other, risks the ‘worst’, the most obvious figures of which could be genocide, ethnic cleansing, Nazism and a nuclear holocaust.

But why are these policies considered the ‘worst’? Why do they demand that we calculate the incalculable? Quite simply because they *close* the future to the coming of the other: “we are only ever opposed to those events that we think obstruct the future or bring death, to those events that put an end... to the affirmative opening for the coming

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<sup>870</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 21.

<sup>871</sup> Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, p. 77.

<sup>872</sup> Derrida, “Force of Law”, p. 28.

<sup>873</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 5.

<sup>874</sup> Derrida, “Force of Law”, p. 28.



of the other”.<sup>875</sup> The policies, ideologies and atrocities of genocide, Nazism and nuclear holocaust seek precisely this. They work to set a limit, a barrier, to the coming of the other and the future. There is a danger that this ‘worst’ is figured only in terms of loss of human life. This would make discussion of ‘openness’, the ‘future’ and ‘the other’ merely a way of camouflaging a conventional subscription to the protection of human life. In essence, Derrida would be in agreement with British and EU foreign policy that the ‘ethical’ is about the prevention of outrageous human death and suffering (Chapters IV and V).

However, the ‘other’ which we keep the future open for is not *just* the human other (other *people*) which contains something of the absolutely other. The other, the future-to-come, is also the coming of justice, responsibility, forgiveness, the gift, hospitality – the *ethical*. These are what remain *to come*; unanticipatable and unknowable as absolute otherness, the closure towards their possible coming is also a figure of the ‘worst.’ And remaining open to such concepts of the to come may well complicate a simply duty to the protection of human life. Thus, every policy, every decision, which is necessarily a closure must be a closure which also characterises an opening. It must be a closure that opens. This may close toward a human life rather than a principle, or vice-versa, or towards one principle/human rather than another. But each such closure must aim to *open*. This will be outlined further when discussing negotiation, but in general terms, while every closure is problematic, the decision must aim to close towards the ‘worst,’ while remaining open towards the other, the *arrivant*, and the future-to-come.

What is lacking in Derrida’s account is certainly a *basis*, a *sure foundation*, upon which to build an ethics. This is why the dual duty to the future-to-come and avoidance of the ‘worst’ must be considered a *nonfoundational* founding. The instability of deconstructive openness is not only due to its problematisation of decisions, but also because it does not unearth a fundamental, timeless truth of ethics *per se*. There can be no ultimate, transcendental basis for what Derrida privileges in the future-to-come, or guards against in terms of the ‘worst’. This is perhaps the reason behind Derrida’s reluctance to

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<sup>875</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 11.



condone a moralistic account of deconstruction which would make foundationalist claims. Yet, what this future-to-come appeals to is precisely a taking of traditional thinking to its very limits; a ‘limit thinking’ of the western metaphysical tradition.

No claims are made to simply *exceed* traditional ethics, subjectivity, justice, responsibility and hospitality. But these concepts, like *différance*, exist on the margins and at the limits of metaphysics.<sup>876</sup> They appeal to what cannot be formalised, programmed and processed in such thought. They are the limit without foundation for Western thought, which reveal a desire for, and thus an openness toward, the possibility of that coming which *will* exceed our current thinking. These concepts are “hyperbolic” rather than foundational, in the sense that hyperbole announces the *possibility* of transcendence. Hyperbole thus “*signals* an open possibility, but it also *provokes* thereby the opening of possibility”.<sup>877</sup> As such, they appeal to a potential ethics to come.

Derrida’s open, hyperbolic ethical concepts (such as justice, responsibility and hospitality) also demand that we enter ethical, policy and legal battles. Such an entry must, however, be based on the injunction of this hyperbole to calculate the incalculable. The calculation of a closure upon the future-to-come needs to be thought, or negotiated, specifically as a way of opening towards them at the same time. *The calculation of closure must have the character of an opening.* This is the only possibility for moving *through* the aporetic undecidability of ethics and foreign policy. But how do we attempt to discern the ‘better’, more open calculation, from the ‘worst’? Only through a negotiation without rules.<sup>878</sup>

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<sup>876</sup> Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, p. 370.

<sup>877</sup> Jacques Derrida, *On The Name*, translated by David Wood, John P. Leavy, Jr, and Ian McLeod (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 64.

<sup>878</sup> Derrida, “Force of Law”, p. 28.



## *Negotiation and its Implications*

Negotiation is charged with the duty of calculating the incalculable, placing conditions on the unconditional, yet preserving openness and undecidability as the *possibility* of ethics and politics. As a concept, especially when compared to notions such as *différance*, undecidability and supplementarity, negotiation is little used in secondary Derridean literature. Therefore, this section examines what precisely ‘negotiation’ means, before drawing out four implications of this rule without rule. This discussion of negotiation and its implications is employed in section three as a way of *moving through* the aporetic undecidability of key concepts in ethics and foreign policy: subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality.

### *Negotiation*

The word ‘negotiation’ arises from the Latin *neg-otium*, meaning ‘no-leisure’. Derrida sees this “[u]n-leisure” as the “impossibility of stopping or settling in a position... establishing oneself anywhere.” Its best figure is that of a shuttle, going back and forth between different positions:<sup>879</sup> the incalculable and the calculable, the universal and particular, the unconditional and conditional. In the example of justice and the law, incalculable justice does not give any rest because it requires the calculation of law to prevent the coming of the worst, or the perverse calculation. This is equally the case with hospitality. Unconditional hospitality cannot offer rest because it requires conditions and restrictions to preserve the ‘home’ and thus the very possibility of hospitality. Yet, neither can we simply opt for laws without a reference to justice, or conditional hospitality which loses its reference to the unconditional. This would close to the future-to-come of these concepts. In claiming that the *right* laws were made, the *hospitable* conditions achieved, we would close the responsibility we owe to the other as other.

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<sup>879</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 12.



Hence, negotiation must shuttle between the unconditional and conditional, absolute and relative, without either of these poles allowing a resting place; without them allowing the decision to become *decidable*. Yet this shuttling movement does not negate the fact that negotiation involves decision. It must always decide, it must cut and close. Otherwise there would be no *movement through* the undecidability of the concepts outlined. But a negotiated decision, as *movement through* the aporia, cannot resolve the aporetic undecidability of subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality, as this is the condition of ethics, politics and the decision.<sup>880</sup> Negotiation is about a decision in some sense *without* rule, *without* knowledge, without *decidability*. Such an *ethico-political* movement aims, through its decision, to preserve the possibility of itself, of its own undecidability.

The decision taken by negotiation then cannot *achieve* justice, a subject capable of taking responsibility, absolute hospitality, or responsibility for *all* others. These must always remain the *may be*, to come. This is implied in the common understanding of negotiation, which, as Derrida notes, is associated with compromise and impurity. There is no crisis in acknowledging that “[n]egotiation is impure”, yet just as the obligatory closure of a negotiated decision must have the character of an opening, so the necessary contamination resulting from negotiation arrives “in the name of purity”.<sup>881</sup> Rather, negotiation seeks “intermediate *schemas*” between the two poles of the undecidable.<sup>882</sup> These intermediate schemas aim to avoid the ‘worst’, or as Derrida clarifies in *Adieu*, negotiation seeks to find the “better” or “least bad” closure. Nothing, he observes, counts more than the quotation marks which must always surround this ‘better’ which is “not good, it is only a stopgap, but one that *it is necessary to seek*, that it is necessary not to stop seeking”.<sup>883</sup>

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<sup>880</sup> Derrida, *Limited Inc*, p. 116.

<sup>881</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 14.

<sup>882</sup> Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, p. 147.

<sup>883</sup> Derrida, *Adieu*, p. 112-113.



## *Implications*

In summary, we can display the barest details of negotiation as an oscillation between the poles of the incalculable and the calculable, the open and closed, always seeking the ‘better’ place to cut, to close and decide. These decisions must have the character of intermediate schemas which belong wholly neither to the incalculable justice, nor to the calculable law.<sup>884</sup> Such closures must strive for the character of an opening by seeking to prevent the coming of that which closes toward the other. This still appears extremely abstract. Therefore, it is necessary to expand upon four of the most important implications of negotiation’s effort to retain ethico-political undecidability, whilst deciding. These are what must be considered when negotiating subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality in section three.

### i) A (non-) policy of decisions

The first aspect of negotiation is that it can never be a *policy* in a narrow sense of the term. ‘Policy’ is a widely used concept without a clear and unambiguous definition.<sup>885</sup> However, in an almost ideal typical sense, ‘policy’ implies that action cannot be “arbitrary or capricious: it is governed by a known formula of universal application... it frees [officials] from the need to make choices”.<sup>886</sup> If ‘policy’ is thus an authoritative rule which one can simply follow in the making of each individual decision then negotiation cannot be considered as such.<sup>887</sup> This is elaborated in an interview Derrida gave in 1987:

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<sup>884</sup> Derrida, “Force of Law”, p. 28.

<sup>885</sup> H.K. Colebatch, *Policy*, Second Edition (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2002), p. 7.

<sup>886</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>887</sup> It must be acknowledged that policy is not always considered such. There are much looser definitions, including in Colebatch, *Policy*. This narrow definition is used to draw out the implications of negotiation. For alternative views and a review of the literature, see Wayne Parsons, *Public Policy: An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Policy Analysis* (Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1995).



An essential aspect of negotiation is that it is always different, differential, not only from one individual to another, from one situation to another, but even for the same individual from one moment to the next. There is no general law, there is no general rule for negotiation. Negotiation is different at every moment, from one context to the next. There are only contexts, and this is why deconstructive negotiation cannot produce general rules, ‘methods.’ It must be adjusted to each case, to each moment without, however, the conclusion being a relativism or empiricism. This is the difficulty. That there is something like an absolute rule of negotiation that can only be adjusted to political, historical situations.<sup>888</sup>

As a ‘policy,’ negotiation does not rule anything in or out. What Derrida calls the “categorical imperative, the unconditional duty of all negotiation” is “to let the future have a future... to leave the possibility of the future open”.<sup>889</sup> This is the “something like an absolute rule” of negotiation referred to above. All we have then are the two poles to oscillate between and the requirement that each decision, each closure, must remain as open as possible.

Negotiation is always about *individual decisions*; how openness is negotiated in each closure depends entirely on the context of that decision. There is no rule or moral norm that we can simply apply as this would make the decision *decidable* and *make the decision for us*. For example, a moral norm that unites the representation of British and EU foreign policy is the value of ‘human rights’.<sup>890</sup> Yet, negotiation does not allow us to make our decisions based on such a moral norm. If we did, we would not be *making* the decision, nor taking responsibility *for* it. Rather, we would be establishing a process whereby foreign policy decisions are *produced*. This is one danger associated with Straw’s suggestion that Britain should enact a “diplomacy of foresight” with human rights acting as “a sort of early warning system” of state failure.<sup>891</sup> Such a model could justify a simple application of the norm of human rights to any individual foreign policy

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<sup>888</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 17.

<sup>889</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 85.

<sup>890</sup> For example, in Cook’s “Mission Statement” he pledged that the “Labour Government will put human rights at the heart of our foreign policy”. Javier Solana declared to the European Parliament that a “key element” of EU foreign policy “must be the promotion of human rights anywhere in the world” – see Speech to European Parliament, Strasbourg, 17 November 1999.

<sup>891</sup> Straw, “Re-ordering the World”.



situation, similar to the way that a machine is applied to raw materials. Britain's intervention in Sierra Leone could occur then not as a *decision*, but because British foreign policy is *programmed* to *produce* this policy in the case of human rights abuses. The result is not a decision but the *product* of a moral norm, as the product of a machine.

This does not mean, however, that moral norms can be abandoned. Rather, in each individual context-bound foreign policy situation, negotiation makes a difficult double movement of both referring to, and suspending, moral norms and rules. Such norms must be conserved *and* destroyed.<sup>892</sup> In the example of human rights, we must preserve the importance of 'human rights', yet not allow them to *give* the decision. We must remain always suspicious of moral norms such as human rights, yet we must always intervene to prevent the worst. Destroying moral norms such as human rights (in the way they are currently framed, or represented) would open us to the future, but it would potentially usher in the worst: a killing under any circumstances. The moral norm thereby preserves its utility to negotiation as a tool for the prevention of the worst, which closes towards the other.

Each reference to a norm must be justified with regard to the specific context. Thus, if the decision is taken to preserve the policy rule or norm, this preservation must have the character of a *reinvention* or at least a *rejustification* of the rule. The decision must literally be made *as if* the moral rule, the policy, was being invented there and then. Thus the decision is not the mechanical following of a policy rule or moral norm, but a newly invented policy each and every time.<sup>893</sup>

The point is that while negotiation has "something like" an absolute rule,<sup>894</sup> it cannot *produce* answers or policies that can be transferred between contexts. Instead, Derrida says that a "silence is kept concerning the rules or schemas... that would produce for us

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<sup>892</sup> Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, p. 23.

<sup>893</sup> Derrida, "Force of Law", p. 23.

<sup>894</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 17.



‘better’ or less bad mediations.”<sup>895</sup> We can neither tell which moral norms or policies will produce the ‘better’ negotiated decision (that which closes to the ‘worst’ while opening to the future) outside of the context, nor can we make such a ‘successful’ mediation into a policy. Rather than *being* or *producing* a simple policy then, negotiation proves, at most, a *guide* to making the individual, context-bound ethico-political foreign policy decisions.

ii) A structure of urgency

A second implication of a negotiated decision concerns what Derrida calls the “structure of urgency”.<sup>896</sup> While the importance of negotiation as oscillation between imperatives has been emphasised thus far, this cannot mean an indefinite deferral of the decision. The negotiated decision must be made “*with the utmost urgency*. And by *urgency* I mean the necessity of not waiting, or rather, the *impossibility of waiting* for the end of reflection.”<sup>897</sup> Thus, in ‘Force of Law’ Derrida observes that the just decision, “however unrepresentable it may be”, is demanded immediately.<sup>898</sup> The tendency is to see the need for oscillation and the ultimate unjustifiability of the decision as a deferral, a putting-off till later, a delaying of the decision. Yet this is precisely what cannot be the case.

Further, this structure of urgency is not just about the temporal aspect of decision: how *long* the decision takes. It also concerns the knowledge and information one seeks to gather to justify the decision. The demand made above that a ‘policy’ of negotiation must involve the specific context also means trying to take the *whole* of this context into account.<sup>899</sup> Yet the decision *cannot* collect all this knowledge for at least two reasons. Firstly, the context is boundless and thus the decision “cannot furnish itself with infinite

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<sup>895</sup> Derrida, *Adieu*, p. 114.

<sup>896</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 296.

<sup>897</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>898</sup> Derrida, “Force of Law”, p. 26.

<sup>899</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 295.



information and the unlimited knowledge of conditions, rules or hypothetical imperatives that would justify it”.<sup>900</sup>

Secondly, and more importantly, even if all the knowledge and information were available, the moment of decision “must not be the consequence or the effect of this theoretical or historical knowledge”.<sup>901</sup> In a way, the negotiated decision must be taken *without knowledge*. This ‘in a way’ is very important. It does not mean that a decision must be taken in ignorance, or without knowing anything. Indeed, “one needs to know and one needs to know as much as possible and as well as possible”.<sup>902</sup> But, crucially, between this knowledge and the decision “the chain of consequence must be interrupted.”<sup>903</sup> That is to say, the relationship between knowledge and the decision cannot be one of cause and effect; the decision cannot result as a simple consequence of knowledge. Similar to the reference and suspension of moral norms discussed above (where the decision cannot be the consequence *of*, but must refer *to*, moral norms), the relationship between knowledge and the decision must be *interrupted*.

Without this interruption, the decision would be taken out of the order of the undecidable; it would *become decidable* on the basis of knowledge. As with the application of moral norms, attempting to make the decision decidable would mean it is not a decision but a *produced* policy. The decision becomes a *product* of knowledge, a calculable equation which *gives* the decision. Contrary to this, negotiation demands that the decision be *made* by interrupting such chains of consequence. This makes the structure of urgency more than a matter of “the empirical briefness of a lapse of time.”<sup>904</sup> The urgency would be the same if the decision were demanded *now*, immediately, or after an unlimited time of reflection. Regardless of time, the decision must *remain* undecidable for a negotiated decision to take place.

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<sup>900</sup> Derrida, “Force of Law”, p. 26.

<sup>901</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>902</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 298.

<sup>903</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>904</sup> *Ibid.*



It is important to underline the fact that this ‘structure of urgency’ which marks negotiation *does not require ignorance*. It does not mean that we should ignore context, research, information or knowledge of the situation. Rather, the structure of urgency has two implications: one temporal, the other causal. Temporally, the decision is demanded immediately and must cut through reflection and oscillation. Causally, a decision cannot be the simple *consequence* of knowledge, it cannot be *given by* knowledge. Rather the decision must urgently interrupt this chain of consequence.

### iii) Lack of assurance

An important consequence of the latter two points is that negotiation “is everything but a position or an assurance”.<sup>905</sup> The possibility of negotiating *movement through* ethics and foreign policy can only mean possible “advances without assurance”.<sup>906</sup> This is contained within the very definition of negotiation as ‘no-leisure’ meaning that one will never be able to relax, feel satisfied or assured with one’s decision. It is the consequence of negotiation always being a matter of deciding the undecidable, calculating the incalculable, literally *negotiating the nonnegotiable* subjectivity, hospitality, responsibility.<sup>907</sup>

This lack of assurance keeps negotiation loyal to the double-bind of deconstruction, what Derrida calls the difficulty of “gestur[ing] in opposite directions at the same time.”<sup>908</sup> The duty towards the incalculable and calculation, towards an undecidable and decidable subject, responsibility and hospitality, means we forever find ourselves in a “perpetual uneasiness.”<sup>909</sup> If these two duties, these two oppositional gestures, are resolvable into a

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<sup>905</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>906</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>907</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 304.

<sup>908</sup> Derrida, “Dialogue with Jacques Derrida”, p. 120.

<sup>909</sup> *Ibid.*



third position, we would be in the realm of a dialectical reasoning. This third position would rest, it would be at leisure.<sup>910</sup> But this is exactly what must be avoided because the resting, the assurance, would mean we would only be gesturing in *one* direction, obeying *one* duty. The intermediate schemas that result from a negotiation are precisely *not* dialectical resolutions. Rather, they continue to be shifting, context-bound positions which cannot rest because they retain both duties and gestures.

The structure of urgency demands that we decide, that we do not allow an interminable oscillation between imperatives. Such a decision must be a closure, but with the character of an opening. Yet this does not nullify the fact that *it is a closure*, and *every closure is problematic*, as it fails to obey the ‘axiom’ of deconstruction: to let the future come.<sup>911</sup> We can never say then that ‘we’ are capable of responsibility, that we have acted responsibly, hospitably, or indeed, ethically. We can never have a good or clear conscience about our negotiated decisions.<sup>912</sup> When such a positive claim is made (‘I know who I am; that I have made a responsible decision; that I have given hospitality; that I have acted ethically’) we know that ethics and foreign policy are being “reduced to what they must exceed”<sup>913</sup> – a coherent subjectivity, a simple responsibility, a conditional hospitality and an ethical rule.

Another element to the avoiding of assurance is that a negotiated decision cannot avoid risk. A movement through the aporetic undecidability of ethics and foreign policy remains inherently risky. By maintaining an openness to the future, negotiation also maintains an openness to the coming of the ‘worst’. Even the attempt to close towards this ‘worst’ through negotiative intermediate schemas aims to be a closure that maintains openness. This danger must not be played down, nor deconstructive thought made ‘safe’. But at the same time we can acknowledge that *there is no other option*.

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<sup>910</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 13.

<sup>911</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 21.

<sup>912</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 232.

<sup>913</sup> Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe*, translated by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael B. Naas (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), pp. 80-81.



As observed in the introduction to this chapter, there are two non-deconstructive considerations of ethics that would seek to avoid this risk. Firstly, one could acknowledge the aporetic structure of ethics and foreign policy and conclude that it should be abandoned as too problematic or risky. Secondly, one could simply deny the aporia, reduce ethical concepts to that which they exceed, and artificially simplify their application in foreign policy. The first is itself an example of the ‘worst’ as it could be used to justify *any* foreign policy cloaked in the ‘national interest’. The second also *risks* the worst by having no clear idea of what ethical concepts truly involve. This, for Derrida, is even worse than the first option as it risks “the worst along with good conscience” that one has done the right thing.<sup>914</sup> In contrast, negotiation allows us to think other options, other possibilities, other inventions of ethics and foreign policy. A negotiated risk, while irreducibly risky, can be experienced “both as a threat *and as a chance*”,<sup>915</sup> a chance of avoiding the worst, and even inventing the ‘better’.

Negotiation must not be thought of as a solution to the undecidability of ethics and foreign policy, or indeed *any* decision. It *solves* nothing. Rather, it places us in a position of perpetual uneasiness, discomfort and insecurity. We can neither know that we have achieved ethical subjectivity, made the responsible decision or offered hospitality. Nor can we be assured that any negotiated decision or position we take will avoid the coming of the worst. Yet this is not negative. Rather, it is the only way to remain open to the *possibility* of ethical foreign policy, and to the invention of ‘better’ intermediate schemas.

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<sup>914</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, pp. 178-9.

<sup>915</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 65 – emphasis added.



iv) Inventing the im-possible

The final implication of negotiation examined is precisely this invention of new possibilities, the unprecedented and the unthought.<sup>916</sup> Such an invention, as described earlier, *can* be a matter of the reinvention of a moral norm, the affirmation of a rule *as if* it had been invented there and then. However, negotiation cannot be just a way of affirming existing moral norms. Of course the *truly unprecedented* is impossible – repetition and iterability contaminates what it is possible for us to think, as demonstrated in Chapter II. However, there are at least three characterisations to such an unprecedented invention.

In the first sense, everything that results from a negotiation is an unprecedented invention. As observed earlier, each negotiation is a context-bound decision to close and, as such, will differ from one person to the next, and for the same person from one moment to the next.<sup>917</sup> Any closure that breaks with all moral rules, that breaks with knowledge, and that depends upon the individual context must be an invention or inauguration without a program.<sup>918</sup> Although there is inevitable repetition between each such negotiation, this is repetition as iterability meaning both repetition of the same *as well* as alteration and change. When that which is repeated is also transferred to a different context, “[o]ne can perhaps come to recognize other possibilities in it by inscribing it, or *grafting* it onto other chains.”<sup>919</sup> Thus any negotiation we make will be both a repetition *and* an original invention, an inaugural thinking of the unprecedented.

In a second sense the openness of negotiation makes the invention of new possibilities possible. Traditional foreign policies are structured by a profoundly limited thinking that does not challenge unquestioned assumptions about subjectivity, responsibility,

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<sup>916</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 238.

<sup>917</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>918</sup> Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth Roudinesco, *For What Tomorrow...: A Dialogue*, translated by Jeff Fort (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 96.

<sup>919</sup> Derrida, *Limited Inc*, p. 9.



hospitality and the ethical. This has been illustrated with reference to British and EU foreign policy in the previous three chapters. But negotiation must begin and end with a questioning of all such assumptions. An essential part of thinking the ethical and the political is a “*questioning without limit*”.<sup>920</sup>

Initially such questioning results in the revealing of aporias at the heart of traditional systems of thought. Chapters III, IV and V illustrated this in ethics and foreign policy. Through negotiation, however, which remains as open as possible to the future-to-come, we open up a far greater range of possibilities for thought. The retention of what Derrida calls an unconditional “‘hyperbolic’ ethical vision” of his concepts keeps us always “torn” (always with a bad conscience, un-leisure, perpetual uneasiness) but allows the possibility to “inflect politics”, to change things, to think differently, to invent.<sup>921</sup> Examples of such inventions require a specific context, thus the next section explores potential inventions of the un-thought subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality in British and EU foreign policy.

Invention is also important in a third and far more radical sense. What Derrida calls the invention of the “im-possible”.<sup>922</sup> The hyphen both joins and separates possibility and impossibility. Thus the im-possible is not a simple opposite to the possible.<sup>923</sup> Rather, such an invention of the decision, justice, subjectivity, responsibility, hospitality or ethics is the possibility *of* the impossible. Derrida’s best explanation of this difficult notion comes in his discussion of ‘decision’ in *Deconstruction Engaged*. Here he says that for a decision to be a true decision it must be impossible for me to make. Thus, my decision should not be taken by me, but should rather be “the decision of the Other, my decision should be the Other’s decision in me, or through me”.<sup>924</sup>

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<sup>920</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 296.

<sup>921</sup> Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, p. 51.

<sup>922</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Deconstruction Engaged: The Sydney Seminars* (Sydney: Power Publications, 2006), p. 63.

<sup>923</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>924</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.



What is meant by the decision not being mine is that it literally “exceeds my own being, my own possibility, my own potentiality”.<sup>925</sup> If an individual is described as a set of capacities, attributes or predicates, and the decision simply follows from this set of features or possibilities, it is not a decision. Rather, it is the individual operating as the machine discussed earlier. The decision must be that which breaks from how we define ourselves; it must no longer be *of me* as I see myself, but of the other *in, or through, me*. This thinking can be related to all Derrida’s im-possible concepts. Thus, the true negotiated invention of responsibility, the genuinely unprecedented hospitality, must be that which it is impossible for the subject *as they define themselves*. The im-possible invention must be that which goes beyond what we see as possible for *ourselves*. It is only possible for the other, that which exceeds our being, our list of predicates, that which is of the future-to-come.<sup>926</sup>

This section has expanded upon the Derridean concept of ‘negotiation’ and drawn out some of its important implications for a *movement through* the undecidability of ethics and foreign policy. Negotiation, as an oscillating movement, seeks to obey the two imperatives of deconstruction (the calculable and incalculable, the conditional and unconditional, and so on), while necessarily closing to part of this future-to-come. This closure is characterised as an attempt to find ‘better’, or more open, ‘intermediate schemas’ which still avoid the ‘worst’. Such a negotiated closure was shown to be possible neither as a policy following a rule, nor as a simple consequence of knowledge. Rather, it must be a context-bound decision which breaks with both rules and knowledge. While such a negotiation cannot provide assurance against the worst, or give a good conscience, it allows the space for invention of the unthought and im-possible enactment of ethics. It is necessary now to provide some illustrations of how negotiation *could* be played out in ethics and foreign policy – specifically regarding the inseparable concepts of subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality.

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<sup>925</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>926</sup> This may suggest that, as the decision is taken by the other and only *through me*, I become *the machine of the other* just as I may become the machine of moral norms or knowledge which *give* the decision. However, the ‘I’ and the ‘other’ are both fragmented and split, meaning there can be no *simple* machine-like operation here.



### *Negotiating Ethics? Subjectivity, Responsibility, Hospitality*

It was acknowledged in the introduction to this chapter that a danger arose from its structure. The way the discussion moves from an examination of Derridean ethics and its apparent ‘rules’, to a concentration on foreign policy may lead to the assumption that it is treating ethics as a set of rules to be applied to foreign policy. What have been outlined, however, are not ‘rules’ as commonly understood. These “something like”<sup>927</sup> rules of negotiation must be invented and reinvented in each moment of foreign policy. Indeed, as will be shown, negotiation alters the way that ‘foreign policy’ itself is conceived and represented.

This section then, is not simply ‘applying’ any *thing* to any *thing*. Rather, it provides examples of what *could be* possible, *perhaps*, regarding the negotiation of ethics and foreign policy. It suggests possibilities for a *movement through* the undecidability of subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality. These are, of necessity, only indicative sketches, as they are outside the *immediacy* of the context. Such sketches cannot stand in judgement over the ethics of British and EU foreign policy. They do not say what should or should not have been done, which construction of subjectivity is better, which decision more responsible, which policy more hospitable. As observed above, “silence is kept” about the better, or least bad, intermediate schemas that are negotiated, lest they become a de-politicized application of ‘policy’.<sup>928</sup> These sketches cannot even say whether a negotiation *happened* in a specific foreign policy, whether openness was abandoned to a policy of calculated knowledge or the application of a moral norm. We can certainly never say whether an aporia has been *successfully* negotiated.

These illustrations, therefore, remain *suggestive* rather than *prescriptive*, outlining possibilities and im-possibilities which remained unthought in British and EU foreign policy. They criticise the representations of subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality in

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<sup>927</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 17.

<sup>928</sup> Derrida, *Adieu*, p. 114.



these foreign policies, but do not condemn them. How each concept is negotiated has major implications for the negotiation of the other two. This will become apparent as the divided sections cross over each other constantly.

### *Negotiating Subjectivity*

In Chapter III, an analysis of the way ‘Britain’ and the ‘EU’ constructed the subject of ethics and foreign policy found that the *capacity to take responsibility* in international affairs was crucial. This representation was deconstructed along two lines: firstly, by demonstrating the generalisability of state/subject failure as opposed to ‘success’ in taking responsibility; and, secondly, in the way each subject exists within a chain of supplementary subjects which reveals the impossibility of a *fully* present subject capable of taking responsibility. What is required of a negotiation then is the possibility of *moving through* the undecidability of subjectivity. Rather than simply abandoning the subject, a negotiation works to “rearrange it, to subject it to the laws of a context it no longer dominates from the center”.<sup>929</sup>

The first deconstruction examined how the British discourse of subjectivity relied on a dichotomy between the ‘successful’ state/subject (capable of taking responsibility) and the failing state/subject (incapable of responsibility). The inability of ‘Britain’ to take responsibility for its own citizens rights and security on 7/7 revealed what Derrida calls the ‘autoimmunity’ of democracy. This generalises state/subject failure as, on its own account of subjectivity, Britain fails. Either ‘Britain’ remains open to the other and risks failure by suffering further terrorist attacks (thus failing to protect security and human rights) or it fails by closing to the other – both internally and externally (thus restricting human rights and democratic freedoms). Failure is thus generalised and the basis of this constructed subjectivity fragments.

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<sup>929</sup> Derrida, “‘Eating Well’ or the Calculation of the Subject”, p. 105.



The negotiation that must be enacted in this context is between absolute openness of the subject towards the other (which obeys a hyperbolic ethicality but risks the coming of the worst), and a closure of the subject (which risks a self-imposed 'worst' in the restriction of human rights and freedoms). How can a closure in this situation have the character of an opening? An initial concern is that simple solutions be eschewed and the aporia be acknowledged both for 'foreign' and 'domestic' policy (as well as the deconstruction of this distinction through terrorism always being a matter of *the other within the self*).

In a 'domestic' setting, this would, at a minimum, produce a profound questioning of policies such as shooting suspected suicide bombers in the head. This policy was perhaps only truly questioned after 7/7 because the man who died as a result of it was *not* a suicide bomber (but rather a Brazilian electrician). But is there a danger that this policy *as a policy* (rather than a context-bound negotiated decision) of ultimate closure towards the other, leads to a radical failure of the state's claim to subjectivity? A policy of 'shoot to kill', in order to defend itself, risks the subject becoming other than what it claims to be. The attempt to take responsibility for the security of its citizens leads to the possibility of actively *attacking* that security.

The decision to shoot Jean Charles de Menezes *may* have been a negotiated decision, this is not something we can judge. But what must be guarded against is this 'worst' being generalised into dogmatic policy. Each decision regarding potential suicide bombers must be made in the moment, knowing that there are always competing responsibilities for the state subject: towards the victims of the bombing and towards the suspect; towards ethical norms and an absolute ethical openness; towards the openness of the subject and its closure. Every decision constitutes an unassured closure which cannot be absolutely right, but negotiation gives the possibility of *moving through* this undecidability by trying to avoid absolute closure.

Acknowledging the aporia which constitutes every subjectivity in international politics as always already failing would have at least two effects in 'foreign' policy. Firstly, it



would lead to a questioning of policies towards ‘failing’ states which Britain has a ‘responsibility to save’ in its foreign policy. This is discussed below. Secondly, we can inquire as to the impact upon the assertion of ‘Britain’ and the ‘international community’ as subjects. Similarly to 7/7, 9/11 was represented in British foreign policy as an attack not just on an individual nation state, but upon the subjectivity of the international community. Blair thus represented 9/11 as “attacks on the basic democratic values in which we all believe so passionately and on the civilised world”.<sup>930</sup> Straw subsequently described 9/11 as a moment of “strategic opportunity”, which “[w]e owe it to those who founded the international community to seize”.<sup>931</sup> This is also the case in EU foreign policy, with Patten calling 9/11 an “attack on the values that we all share: the values of decency and the values which the whole of the international community has to uphold”.<sup>932</sup>

Such representations seem to *require* the subsequent objectification of Afghanistan as a failing state in order to *assert* a subjectivity as successful ‘international community’ or ‘state’, which has so clearly been proven a failure. What we should be asking is whether such a closure can be justified. Does it have the character of an opening? If 9/11 and 7/7 had been characterised as inevitable possibilities contained within, and constitutive of, ‘our’ (the ‘international community’s’ and ‘Britain’s’) own open, fragmented, *failing*, subjectivity, would any other policies have become thinkable?

The crucial unthought, the potentially im-possible negotiated invention of the autoimmune ‘Britain’ and ‘international community’, would perhaps be to *do nothing*. Perhaps the 7/7 attack need have produced *no extra closure towards the other* – no assertions of the capacity to protect security and human rights through the warranting of identity cards; no attempts at legislation allowing 90-day detention without charge of terrorist suspects; and no ‘shoot to kill’ policy for suicide bombers. Perhaps 9/11 need have produced *no extra closure towards the other* either – no violent assertion of

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<sup>930</sup> Tony Blair, Statement to the House of Commons following the September 11 attacks, 14 September 2001.

<sup>931</sup> Jack Straw, “The Task of Defeating International Terrorism”, 11 November 2001.

<sup>932</sup> Chris Patten, Interview on Sky News, 12 September 2001 and Chris Patten, Interview with Arab News Network, 18 October 2001.



subjectivity as the capacity to take responsibility by invading Afghanistan; no ‘enforcement’ of the international community’s ‘will’ by attacking Iraq.<sup>933</sup> On one level such a policy of inaction would have been precisely what Derrida calls an im-possible invention: the decision that ‘we’, as we define ourselves, *are unable* to take. Yet, because the subjectivity of the international community and ‘Britain’ is split – both failing *and* succeeding – it is also possible for ‘us’ as a democratic, open subjectivity, to produce precisely this lack of extra closure.

The second deconstruction of subjectivity examined how that which answers to the question ‘who?’ (that which is affirmed as the subject) is always shifting between several signifiers. This is especially the case in British foreign policy, where at various times it is ‘Blair’, ‘Britain’, the ‘international community’, and the ‘international coalition’ which is affirmed as that which can take responsibility. The shifting significations illustrated the inability of the subject to ever achieve *full* presence, as each signifier supplements for the lack of responsibility taken by its predecessor. Rather, the subject of ethics and foreign policy exists as an undecidable effect of supplementary *différance*.

That which is capable of responsibility in international politics is therefore never obvious, but rather remains to be negotiated. The negotiation must take place between the poles of an open subjectivity that remains undetermined and undeterminable, and the stability and assurance of a subject that can respond to the call of the other, that can *take* responsibility. In British foreign policy, such a call from the other has been represented as the outrageous suffering and death of Kosovan refugees, Sierra Leonians, the oppressed people of Afghanistan and Iraq, and the victims of state failure (especially in Africa).

This call demands that there be an artificial halt to the substituting chain of signifiers which constitutes subjectivity. A subject, or several subjects, must be constituted as capable of taking responsibility, and the myth of this coherent capacity for responsibility

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<sup>933</sup> Maja Zehfuss makes a similar argument to this from a different angle in, “Forget September 11” *Third World Quarterly: Journal of Emerging Areas* Vol. 24, No.3 (2003), pp. 513-528.



must be affirmed *in certain circumstances*. Negotiation is about determining these circumstances, and the particular subjectivity that will be authorized in a specific context. The temporary affirmation of a subject does not mean that in each circumstance the same responsibility is required. This will be discussed below.

The decision of which mythical subjectivity to assert cannot help but close; however, it must remain as open as possible through a constant questioning. Who, or what, is excluded by the affirmation of 'Britain' in relation to Sierra Leone? By not involving the United Nations, the African Union, or other individual nations, are others being illegitimately excluded from this subjectivity? These questions and imperatives have to be negotiated against the need to respond to the call of the other with *urgency*. What about the 'international community' in Kosovo? Are we closing towards those considered outside the definition of the 'international community'? If so, perhaps it is the representation of the international community as subject which requires negotiation.

At all times one must be aware of the power relations which are being instituted by a claim to subjectivity. To take these into account, the subject must be literally *reinvented* each time. 'Britain', the 'international community', the 'international coalition', must be re-justified and recreated each time they are declared, such that the 'Britain' which takes responsibility by intervening in Sierra Leone cannot be the same 'Britain' which takes responsibility by instituting the CA.

Any assertion of a responsible subject must remain without assurance. We will never know if the 'better' subject has been negotiated in a given situation. Therefore, even when the decision has been taken, the questioning must not stop. It must remain *political* and undecidable. There must be ceaseless interrogation both before *and after* a subject's affirmation. Such an interrogation will also help maintain the *temporary* character of the claim. If 'Britain' is declared as the subject to take responsibility in relation to Sierra Leone, this must not then become a 'policy', a dogmatic assertion of 'Britain' whenever there is a call from 'Africa'. Similarly, the assertion of the 'international community' in



Kosovo, or the ‘international coalition’ in Afghanistan, should not stop us negotiating and questioning the inclusiveness of these subjectivities.

Negotiating the subject of ethics and foreign policy may well mean that ‘Britain’ as a subject falls into disuse. Perhaps the nation-state subject will be deemed never open enough towards the future-to-come, towards the absolute other, to be affirmed as that which takes responsibility. If so, what we may be negotiating here is the end of ‘foreign policy’ as traditionally conceived. The fact that ‘Britain’ appeared to be taking less responsibility and the ‘international community’ so much more (the fact that one signifier supplemented the other) led Hain to speculate in 2001 about “the end of foreign policy” altogether.<sup>934</sup> This may be a healthy questioning of ‘British’ subjectivity. However, its temporary character is shown a year later when a new Junior Minister, Denis MacShane, gave what appeared to be a direct response in a speech entitled, “The Return of Foreign Policy”.<sup>935</sup>

There can be no conclusions drawn from this discussion of negotiating the possibility of a subject which can take responsibility in world politics. The subject is always already split, differs from itself and defers back to other signifiers. What has been drawn out is the importance of halting this slide of signifiers in response to a call. Yet this temporary affirmation of a subject must be negotiated against the importance of openness towards the other, always questioned, never assured or allowed to solidify into a reified policy. This subjectivity must also negotiate its aporetic, ever-failing character against the need to protect its citizens without violent closure towards the other – internally and externally. Policies which affirm a subject of ethics and foreign policy can only then be context-bound decisions, always open to renegotiation and reinvention. Thus, the negotiating of a subject of ethics and foreign policy enacts a perpetual *ethico-political* foreign policy.

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<sup>934</sup> Peter Hain, “The End of Foreign Policy?”, 22 January 2001.

<sup>935</sup> Denis MacShane, “The Return of Foreign Policy”, 13 February 2002.



## *Negotiating Responsibility*

Chapter IV examined the way the *enactment* of responsibility was represented in British foreign policy. In other words, how responsibility itself was represented in the British text where it was the dominant signifier for ethics in foreign policy. What emerged was two primary responsibilities, *to protect* and *to save*, both based upon an unexamined responsibility to avert outrageous and preventable human death and suffering. This assumption also requires unlimited questioning and will be returned to at the end of the discussion.

The ‘responsibility to protect’ the human rights of others through humanitarian intervention in Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan worked by effacing the “eternal moral dilemma” first noted in Iraq by Straw.<sup>936</sup> This was caused by there always being morality, or ‘responsibility to protect’, on both sides of the argument: both to those who suffer and die under a tyrannical regime, *but also* to those who will suffer and die as a result of an invasion. This impossible responsibility must be negotiated by acknowledging the ethical aporia in *all these situations*. Interventions in Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan should be questioned along the same lines as Iraq. However, rather than allowing this dilemma a simple resolution (“[r]idding the world of Saddam would be an act of humanity. It is leaving him there that is in truth inhumane”)<sup>937</sup> it should be allowed to stand, with all the uncomfortable consequences that flow from it.

This means, above all, no longer representing the enactment of the ‘responsibility to protect’ with “a clear conscience and a strong heart”.<sup>938</sup> A clear conscience afterwards does not, *of necessity*, mean Blair acted irresponsibly in the decision, though it certainly *suggests* that Blair is ignoring his responsibility to other others. If this responsibility is not being ignored, it is difficult to see how a clear conscience and a strong heart could be achieved. Thus, we can argue that such a simplistic *representation* of the decision seeks to close the space for deconstructive questioning both before and *after* it. Negotiation

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<sup>936</sup> Straw, “Iraq: A Challenge We Must Confront”.

<sup>937</sup> Blair, “Let the United Nations mean what it says and do what it means”.

<sup>938</sup> Blair, Statement to House of Commons opening Iraq debate.



demands that the dilemma of ethics and responsibility *remain* political. The oscillation between imperatives (responsibility towards *both* sets of others) must continue to allow the closure – the closure that calculates which responsibility to enact – to remain as open as possible.

Such a calculation, however, cannot mean that the decision is given on the simple basis of knowledge. Again, the way the decision to invade Iraq was justified, the way the moral dilemma was resolved, was often represented as being because of what was ‘known’ about Saddam’s regime.<sup>939</sup> Straw argues that, “[i]n the circumstances, deciding to give Saddam the benefit of the doubt would have required a huge leap of faith.”<sup>940</sup> Yet such a leap is precisely what negotiation requires: a leap *beyond* knowledge, *beyond* knowledge *giving* the decision. The aporetic structure of the decision itself requires that it *cannot* be ultimately justified by knowledge. Neither can it be justified by the application of an ethical norm, rule or policy, such as the ‘responsibility to protect’. A doctrinal rule cannot *give* the decision. Rather, negotiation requires a leap beyond both rules *and* knowledge, such that if the rule ends up being affirmed, it is reinvented there and then in each decision. Each time, in each context, in each *moment*, the ‘responsibility to protect’ which flows from the DIC must be re-invented, rather than simply applied.

Keeping the decision open for as long as possible, maintaining the *political* nature of the ‘responsibility to protect’, while recognising that the decision is demanded in urgency, allows space for the inventive play of negotiation. Too often questions of humanitarian intervention are represented as a choice between invasion or economic sanctions/diplomatic pressure (often themselves represented as *doing nothing*).<sup>941</sup> Negotiation raises the possibility of policies that remain unthought in this binary distinction; policies which necessarily close towards the other, but also *open*. As Christoph Bluth notes,

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<sup>939</sup> See especially the ‘facts’ that were known about Iraq that became the basis of policy: Blair, Speech to the Welsh Assembly, 30 October 2001.

<sup>940</sup> Straw, Iraq Statement.

<sup>941</sup> Before the war in Iraq Blair claims that the international community “will talk but not act; will use diplomacy but not force” (Tony Blair, “Iraq Statement to Parliament,” 24 September 2002). After the war, justifying humanitarian interventions in general, Blair claims that it is a problem if under international law, “there is nothing anyone can do, when dialogue, diplomacy and even sanctions fail” – Blair, Speech on the threat of global terrorism.



critics of the invasion of Iraq failed to offer alternatives to deal with human rights abuses in Iraq.<sup>942</sup> We must ask whether possibilities were ruled out by characterising the decision in such a way (invasion versus sanctions), whether effacing our responsibility to those who died as a result of ‘humanitarian intervention’ closes down the space for negotiation too soon.

It may be that in situations such as Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan or Iraq there were no other possibilities. But this is both unlikely and cannot excuse closing towards a ‘better’ intermediate schema, the closure which opens *more*. Once again, we cannot know, or judge, whether British foreign policy negotiated a responsible decision. We cannot even know, or judge, whether a ‘decision’ was made at all, or if a program (as knowledge or rule) was enacted. Nonetheless, the *representation* of decisions as a ‘responsibility to protect’ in the British foreign policy text have had dangerous implications in terms of de-politicizing ethical questions of responsibility. This representation was irresponsible in closing debate, closing space for a negotiation, and thus closing towards greater openness to the other.

It is also crucial to bear in mind that responsibility cannot be considered separately from subjectivity. Who is constructed as *taking* responsibility in a specific context will have a large impact upon how such a responsibility is *taken*. Therefore, part of any negotiation of the ‘responsibility to protect’ is the negotiation of the openness of the subject which *takes* the responsibility. ‘Openness’ here means the degree to which the subject of ethics and foreign policy is open to contestation. The de-essentialising and de-reifying of the subject which *takes* responsibility will also, *perhaps*, contribute to the openness of political debate about which ‘others’ we are responsible for protecting. This will be examined in terms of the EU and hospitality below.

This link between subjectivity and responsibility is fundamental to the second of the responsibilities discussed: the ‘responsibility to save’. Chapter IV demonstrated that the

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<sup>942</sup> Christoph Bluth, “The British Road to War: Blair, Bush and the decision to invade Iraq,” *International Affairs* Vol. 80, No. 5 (2004), pp. 884-885.



genuinely moral conception of Britain's 'responsibility to save' Africans was undermined by its necessary corollary: the contempt for, and patronisation of, 'Africa' as an 'object', incapable of taking responsibility for 'its' own people. This was shown by the supplementation of the *African* led NEPAD by the *British* inspired CA. The 'saving' of Africa and Africans is represented as an attempt to save human life by helping 'Africa' to become a subject as conceived in British foreign policy. Rather than a hyperbolic respect for the other *as other*, the 'responsibility to save' involves an (ir)responsible conditional respect for the other *as becoming same*.

These are the two poles that must be negotiated between. To opt for a responsibility involving an unconditional respect for the other *as other* would be open to the other but also to the coming of the worst: a genocidal conflict such as that in Rwanda. And the impact of this figure of the worst should not be underestimated; as Straw says, the international community's failure in Rwanda "still haunts us today".<sup>943</sup> Thus restrictions are necessary upon openness. Yet the opposite pole of contemptuous pity for the African other *as other* until they *become the same* is another version of the 'worst'. There must be a negotiation between the poles of an unconditional responsibility of saving the other *as other*, and a conditional responsibility of saving the other *by becoming same*.<sup>944</sup> Campbell sums up the problem in Bosnia as a similar matter of how to "reclaim politics from pity and enable the exercise of responsibility while at the same time paying respect to those small steps that have already been taken".<sup>945</sup>

A negotiation of responsibility requires an initial recognition and acknowledgement of its aporetic structure. Just as there is no simple resolution of the 'responsibility to protect', there can be no solution to the 'responsibility to save'. This must be followed by ceaseless questioning of British foreign policy's conception of subjectivity. If, as shown in Chapter III, there is no way 'Britain' can be conceived as a 'successful' subject

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<sup>943</sup> Straw, "Shaping a Stronger United Nations".

<sup>944</sup> The discussion of this negotiation will have obvious resonance for the EU's conditional hospitality granted to Central and Eastern European countries and the Balkans (see Chapter V). The conditions upon this hospitality were such that, before entry into the European home was granted to the other, this other had to demonstrate that it had become the same: part of the European family of nations.

<sup>945</sup> Campbell, "Violence, Justice, and Identity in the Bosnian Conflict", p. 23.



of ethics in its own terms, how can ‘Africa’, or ‘African nations’ be required to achieve this impossibly coherent and transcendental subjectivity? A more open conception of what subjectivity ‘is,’ or is capable of being, must be part of negotiating the ‘responsibility to save’. This also involves questioning the ‘international community’ as subject: perhaps its current representation is insufficiently open if it excludes ‘Africa’, which can only “be standing proud in its own right in the international community”<sup>946</sup> if it *becomes same*.

A negotiation would also ask whether any “comprehensive” plan to save Africa pays sufficient attention to the specific context of each individual policy, at every moment, examining its openness to the other *as other*. Rather than ‘comprehensiveness’ being the goal of all plans for Africa, perhaps individually tailored plans would show more respect for the otherness of ‘Africa’. Certainly, the application of rules on such wide ranging issues as democratic rights, corruption, the rule of law, democracy, good governance, commercial systems, education, infrastructure and so on, must be questioned as to the extent it allows Africans to develop their own conception of ethical subjectivity.

Leaving these issues open to individual context-bound negotiation of policies, or at least their re-invention, may be considered too risky. This risk must be acknowledged and warily embraced. Remaining open and enacting a responsibility to save ‘Africa’, ‘African nations’ or even the African Union, by encouraging a negotiation of their own subjectivity (which *remains other*) will give no assurance against the return of ‘Rwanda’ (as symbol of the worst). But neither is treating every African state as an objectified future-Rwanda an ethical or responsible policy. It risks becoming a pitying, contemptuous version of the ‘worst’, even if it comes with a good conscience.

Remaining open towards the ‘responsibility to save’ the other *as other*, while retaining risk, also gives the possibility of *invention*. Such an intermediate schema could take many forms. It could, perhaps, be as simple as the supporting of NEPAD without its supplementation by the CA. It could mean a new version of the CA which makes no

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<sup>946</sup> Blair, “Speech on Africa”.



claims to being “comprehensive” and perhaps demands *less*, if not nothing, in return for Britain’s responsibility to save. It could even mean a withdrawal of such grand plans for Africa and a negotiation of each responsibility in its specific context. Even at a basic level, an openness to negotiation could at least prevent us simply speaking of ‘Africa’ and ‘its’ problems as a first step to no longer treating ‘it’ as a homogeneous, undifferentiated object. Even if the ‘responsibility to save’ were to remain in its current form after all negotiation, a “comprehensive” policy must *at least* maintain a space for ethico-political questioning.

Finally, the unquestioned foundation of British and EU foreign policy’s claim to responsibility also needs to be opened to ethico-political enquiry: a responsibility to end preventable and outrageous suffering and loss of human life. What is excluded by their construction of ‘preventable’ and outrageous loss and suffering? What ‘human life’ is not considered to matter here? Regarding the EU, the question arises as to its privileging of ‘life’ which is proximate to its ‘self’. If every other (one) *is* every (bit) other, then what moral difference can geographical proximity make? This is considered in the next section.

In British foreign policy, we must ask which lives are considered expendable, and what is considered acceptable (as opposed to outrageous) suffering. Too often our responsibility towards combatants is ignored and effaced. There was little or no discussion of Serbian soldiers, Sierra Leonian gangsters (or even Sierra Leonian civilians in fact), Taliban fighters or Iraqi soldiers who died as a result of our ‘responsibility to protect’. Does this omission close too precipitously towards the other? There can be no justification for excluding these lives from the negotiation of a ‘responsibility to protect’ *human life*.

In the ‘responsibility to save’, by concentrating on the outrageous, there is a risk of closing towards those others who suffer as a result of natural disasters. Blair justified the greater attention given to victims in Africa, as opposed to those of the Asian Tsunami, as



a matter of Africa being “a preventable disaster”.<sup>947</sup> Yet surely such natural disasters as Tsunamis and earthquakes (in Pakistan, Indonesia and Iran) produce equally *preventable* death and suffering as AIDS in Africa? Even if the disaster itself is not preventable, subsequent deaths as a result of damage to infrastructure, lack of medicine, food and shelter could be both outrageous *and* preventable.

No consideration is given to the implications of how foreign policy constructs those lives which *do* matter. Howells, for example, represents these as “non-combatants,” primarily “women and children.”<sup>948</sup> Kim Hutchings observes that concentrating on ‘women and children’ as illegitimate subjects of political violence is a common way of constructing a gendered shorthand for the discussion of ethics in world politics: killing men (soldiers especially, who are always represented as men) is acceptable; killing women is outrageous and preventable.<sup>949</sup> What must be negotiated then, is precisely what foreign policy constructs as outrageous and acceptable, preventable and unpreventable death and suffering. To remain open towards the other, and the future-to-come, there must be a questioning of the assumptions contained in all moral norms that may be re-invented through negotiation.

### *Negotiating Hospitality*

Chapter V drew out the way in which the EU represented the ethical dimension of its foreign policy (1999-2004) primarily as a responsibility to its proximate regions. This policy is closely tied to the EU’s conception of its own subjectivity as a ‘home’, concentrating its responsibility upon its ‘family’ and its ‘neighbourhood’ or ‘backyard’. As such, the EU largely exercises its responsibility through *hospitality* in more or less conditional, and more or less extensive ways. This discourse of hospitality, however, deconstructs in two ways: firstly, through the aporetic structure of hospitality (as

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<sup>947</sup> Tony Blair, PM Press Conference, 6 January 2005.

<sup>948</sup> Howells, “Why the UN Millennium Review Summit matters to the UK”.

<sup>949</sup> Kim Hutchings, “Feminist Ethics and Political Violence”, in Brassett and Bulley (eds.), “Ethics in World Politics” (*forthcoming*).



unconditional and conditional); and, secondly, through the concept of hospitality deconstructing the very subjectivity of the EU as a 'home'. Thus, in illustrating the negotiation of hospitality in EU foreign policy, we return to the negotiation of the subject of responsibility.

The first deconstruction occurs because the hospitality offered by the EU through the policies of enlargement (to Central and Eastern Europe, and subsequently the Balkans) and the ENP is both highly conditional and differential. It does not, and cannot, open to the other as much as is demanded by unconditional hospitality. As such, the EU's foreign policy is always both hospitable *and* hostile, ethical *and* unethical. Negotiation must be enjoined between the heterogeneous and indissociable poles of unconditional and conditional hospitality. An unconditional hospitality, which asks no questions and sets no conditions upon entry, would be a great openness but also risk the worst: destroying the very home which makes hospitality possible in the first place. But equally, a highly conditional hospitality closes the EU home to the other, and ushers in the worst as an unethical, dogmatic exclusion.

A negotiation between these poles involves a constant questioning of the conditions set upon entry to the EU. Each decision on an application to join the European 'home' would be both individual and context-bound. As such, a negotiation of hospitality must question the policy of placing Balkan countries on a unilinear 'road' to EU membership.<sup>950</sup> The representation of this 'road' as a single track, the same for Bosnia Herzegovina as it is for Croatia, FYROM and Serbia and Montenegro, suggests that 'hospitality' may have ossified into dogmatic conditions applied to each applicant, regardless of specific characteristics, history and needs. The 'Stabilisation and Association Agreements' which place them on this 'road' are certainly represented as similar "commitments" to "thoroughgoing reform."<sup>951</sup> This apparently undifferentiated approach disallows the negotiation of an ethico-political decision which remains as open as possible to the other, taking each particular 'case' as a singularity. The conditions

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<sup>950</sup> Patten, Speech to the Peace Implementation Council.

<sup>951</sup> Patten, Speech to the OSCE Permanent Council.



could prove too closed to allow for others arriving and travelling on *different paths* to the European home, or knocking at different doors, dependent upon their needs.

A negotiation of hospitality also challenges the intense questioning of applicant countries. Prodi describes the “questionnaire” handed to Croatian and FYROM upon their applications as “over 2,500 questions on the political, economic, and administrative situation in the country”, the answers to which “will form the basis for the Commission’s opinion on the starting of accession negotiations”.<sup>952</sup> The emphasis on the number of questions suggests the EU is seeking assurance based on comprehensive knowledge that would *give* the decision (or at least the Commission’s opinion) as a pre-programmed response. This risks a closure towards the other in the name of an impossible assurance against the worst. These questions and conditions, at a minimum, must be kept under constant review. They must be interrogated each time to see if, for example, the specific history and characteristics of the FYROM demands less restrictive conditionality. Perhaps the FYROM is in more urgent *need* of the EU’s hospitality than Croatia (for reasons of security, prosperity or stability for example).

The aim of these questions and conditions upon hospitality must also be challenged. Just as there was a concern that the ‘responsibility to save’ contemptuously objectified ‘Africa’ and required ‘its’ *becoming same* to gain respect, the ‘road’ to Europe placed the responsibility for the EU’s hospitality *on the Balkans becoming same*. Applicant countries must prove that they are part of the European ‘family’ before they can be allowed into the ‘home’, following the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and answering their questions correctly. It seems that rather than hospitality granting entry of the other *as other*, this requires that the other *become same* before entry.

The oscillation between unconditional hospitality and conditional hospitality must be precisely this negotiation between hospitality to the other *as other* and the other *as same*. This difficulty is tied to the subjectivity of the EU as ‘home’. The ‘home’ necessarily excludes and closes to the other, but this closure is also the condition of openness, the

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<sup>952</sup> Prodi, “Croatia’s journey towards EU membership”.



condition of its granting hospitality. This is the second aporia of hospitality: unconditional hospitality granted to the other *as other*, no questions asked or conditions set, would mean the European ‘home’ could no longer simply be the EU’s. The European ‘home’ would also be the ‘home’ of the other and the place where the EU’s subjectivity is held hostage and questioned by the other. Hospitality deconstructs that which makes it possible: the ‘home’.

Therefore we return to a negotiation of subjectivity; the negotiation of hospitality in EU foreign policy is a negotiation of how the EU conceives its ‘self’. The demand for this negotiation is even greater because, as shown in relation to the Ukraine, the other is already within: the EU is a stranger to itself, its subjectivity is already not what it claims to be. Above all, an acknowledgement of the aporia is required, a recognition that the other is already within and it has not of necessity destroyed the EU’s feeling of being at home with itself. As Shapiro notes, “cosmopolitanism must begin at home”, through an “ethic of hospitality... to one’s collective self”.<sup>953</sup> This is a first step to what negotiation seeks to achieve: a de-reification, a de-essentialising, of the European ‘home’, or what Shapiro calls, “a degree of unreading, unmapping, and re-writing”.<sup>954</sup>

Such a de-essentialising of the European ‘home’ means questioning the predicates that the EU uses to represent itself. As discussed in Chapter V, this ‘home’ contains both geographical and moral elements. Firstly, those granted hospitality must be considered *geographically* European, hence the responsibility towards the proximate ‘family.’ Secondly, the EU represents its ‘home’ as based on “political and ethical” values such as justice, transparency, democratic accountability,<sup>955</sup> tolerance, inclusiveness and respect for others.<sup>956</sup> There is, perhaps, a third stipulation that is silently assumed: that hospitality can only be offered to a nation-state.

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<sup>953</sup> Shapiro, “The Events of Discourse”, p. 713.

<sup>954</sup> Shapiro, “The Ethics of Encounter”, p. 77.

<sup>955</sup> Prodi, “Europe and Global Governance”.

<sup>956</sup> Prodi, Inauguration of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.



An im-possible negotiated invention of the ethical in EU foreign policy would be something which was not possible based on these predicates; a hospitality that the EU as it defines itself *could not* offer. In territorial terms this could involve moving away from the ENP and the question of Ukraine. What about countries which are not territorially adjacent to the EU and yet share their ethical and political heritage? Could hospitality be extended to Canada, Australia or even, perhaps, Brazil? Negotiating the political and ethical values of the European ‘home’, a degree of unreading could permit a relaxation of demands upon Turkey. But could an invitation be extended to those nearby who may be in *need* of such hospitality (for reasons of security, prosperity, stability and so on), without achieving the strict requirement of values? Could Lebanon, Morocco, or even, perhaps, Jordan be extended such hospitality? Finally, we could adapt Shapiro’s critique of Kant’s hospitality: because of the EU’s attachment to state sovereignty it “lack[s] a sensitivity to peoples and nations that [are] not organised in the form of states”.<sup>957</sup> Could the EU consider advancing hospitality to *peoples* who are not *states*, such as the Kurds?

These are, of course, highly unlikely speculations. But they are precisely the possibilities of the impossible that remain to be thought, through a negotiation of hospitality and subjectivity in foreign policy. A de-essentialising of the European ‘home’ will always, and must, remain a dangerous and calculated policy. While ethical subjectivity is shifting, fragmented and impossible to fix, it must still be affirmed in response to the call of the other. This remains the case with the European ‘home’. Too great an ‘unreading’ of the EU subject would lead to the ‘worst’: the destruction of the very ‘home’ which permits hospitality. Yet, especially in territorial terms, there appears much room for negotiation. The territorial boundaries of the EU have never been fully reified; as Romano Prodi himself notes, to the East and South “it is very difficult to make out the new frontiers of Europe. This, of course, is nothing new: it has been hard to decide where Europe ends in these two compass directions for thousands of years.”<sup>958</sup>

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<sup>957</sup> Shapiro, “The Events of Discourse”, p. 697.

<sup>958</sup> Prodi, “Europe and the Mediterranean: time for action”.



The importance of negotiation lies in preventing an entrenchment of EU subjectivity such that the ‘home’ becomes a closure without opening. This negotiation of the home is also a negotiation of the conditions placed upon hospitality. At minimum, negotiation could be a space for questioning the ENP’s overt hostility (being “for those neighbours for which accession is not on the agenda”)<sup>959</sup> which still retains a reference, if small, to hospitality. This must be a questioning of the EU’s claims to subjectivity. There is evidence that this questioning is being performed in the EU’s hospitality discourse. Patten observes in his memoirs that “the question of the further enlargement of the EU arrives as the most important question of Europe’s identity, of what Europe is to become”.<sup>960</sup> Enlargement, or hospitality, is not just about what it is to *become*, it is also a question of whether ‘Europe’ has a *to come*. “Certainly,” says Patten, “we cannot enlarge forever. But I do not believe we can stop yet...”<sup>961</sup> This questioning is a minimum requirement of negotiating ethics in EU foreign policy.

## ***Conclusion***

This chapter began by asking, given the aporetic undecidability of the concepts of ethics and foreign policy outlined in Chapters III, IV and V, ‘where do we go from here?’ Rejecting the appeals of two non-deconstructive options (abandoning ethics and foreign policy or ignoring the aporia and attempting to move forwards with an irresponsible thematisation), the chapter suggested that we turn to Derrida’s concept of ‘negotiation’ as a possible *movement through* undecidability. The aim of such negotiation is not an ethical foreign policy, which can only remain *to come*, but rather an ethico-political foreign policy.

The first section examined the main critique of a Derridean ‘ethics’: that the rigorous undecidability of his concepts allows us no way of making the ethical/political decision. Through a reading of ‘Force of Law’ it was established that Derrida tackles precisely this

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<sup>959</sup> Prodi, Speech on visit to Bogazici University.

<sup>960</sup> Patten, *Not Quite the Diplomat*, p. 143.

<sup>961</sup> *Ibid.*



issue, observing that the incalculability of justice demands that we calculate in order to avoid the 'worst'. Negotiation enters here as the oscillating movement between the calculable and the incalculable, the conditional and the unconditional, obeying the dual duty of deconstruction: staying *open* to the future-to-come and *closing* through decision to avoid the 'worst'. A negotiated calculation of this closure, therefore, is required to *have the character of an opening* by only closing to others, ideologies, events and calculations which seek to prevent the future, the other, justice and ethics from coming.

The second section introduced and outlined four implications of 'negotiation' as a *movement through* the undecidability of ethics and foreign policy. While the job of negotiation is to oscillate between imperatives (calculation and the incalculable, conditional and unconditional and so on), it must also decide and close by creating 'intermediate schemas'. Such a negotiated closure is possible neither as a policy following a moral norm or rule, nor as a simple consequence of the knowledge gained about the situation. Rather, as a matter of urgency, a decision must break with moral norms and knowledge. While negotiation gives no assurance against the 'worst', it allows space for invention of the unthought, even im-possible, enactment of ethics and foreign policy. As such negotiation is both a threat *and an opportunity*.

Finally, the third section examined the possibility of negotiating the subjectivities, responsibilities and hospitalities of the British and EU foreign policy text. This must not be seen as the simple application of negotiation (as a set of ethical rules) to foreign policy. Rather, as a context bound rule without rule, negotiation and foreign policy both transform each other. The illustrations of such negotiations were thus merely suggestive, revealing possibilities (abandonment of a comprehensive plan for 'Africa') and impossibilities (the EU inviting Lebanon and the Kurds into the European 'home') for ethico-political foreign policy decisions.

This has been a highly circumspect answer to the question: 'where do we go from here?' Perhaps, in conclusion, we should challenge the 'where' of this question. It implies the search for a place where ethics and foreign policy is possible, where the aporetic



undecidability of subjectivity, responsibility and hospitality will be resolved or *resolvable*. Given the interminability of this undecidability, however, the ‘where’ must always remain the impossible to come. Instead, perhaps it would be more fruitful to ask ‘*how* do we go from here?’ This *how* suggests the possibility of a *movement through* aporia and undecidability rather than a *movement beyond* to a ‘where’. This *how* can perhaps best be conceived as a negotiation. Rather than an ethical foreign policy, it seeks an *ethico-political* foreign policy; it keeps the political undecidability of ethics from becoming de-politicised and decidable. ‘*How* do we go from here?’ We *move through* aporetic undecidability by retaining a space for the *negotiation* of ethics and foreign policy.



## Conclusion

*"I'm an optimistic Sisyphean when it comes to ethics and foreign policy. I hope to end up with the stone a bit higher up the mountain than when I started."* Lord Howe of Aberavon.<sup>962</sup>

This thesis has offered an answer to the question of to what extent an ethical foreign policy be considered possible. In terms of the foreign policy texts examined, it has investigated whether a truly ethical, responsible relation to otherness as foreign policy is a possibility. This has produced a reconceptualisation of the dichotomy of possibility and impossibility in terms of undecidability, and sought a movement *through* such undecidability via the Derridean concept of negotiation. Despite never speaking of ethics in the section of his autobiography devoted to his time as British Foreign Secretary (1983-1989),<sup>963</sup> Lord Howe's description of ethics and foreign policy is evocative of this argument.

Sisyphus, a King in Greek mythology, was condemned by the Gods to endlessly roll a large stone up a mountain. However, each time Sisyphus neared the top, the stone would roll back down the hill and he would have to start all over again.<sup>964</sup> Like the Sisyphean goal of reaching the top of the mountain, an ethical foreign policy is ultimately unachievable. Thus, negotiation seeks a movement *through* the undecidability of ethics and foreign policy, rather than a movement *towards* its decidability; it concentrates on *how* the stone could be rolled rather than *where* it will end up. Nonetheless, this thesis remains, like Lord Howe, *optimistically* Sisyphean; the unrealisable goal of an ethical foreign policy persists as the animating concern of the deconstruction and negotiation in Chapters III to VI.

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<sup>962</sup> Lord Howe of Aberavon, Interviewed by Dan Bulley, the House of Lords, Westminster, London, 5 April 2005.

<sup>963</sup> Geoffrey Howe, *Conflict of Loyalty* (London and Basingstoke: Pan Books, 1995), pp. 301-598.

<sup>964</sup> Homer, *The Odyssey*, translated by Walter Shewring (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), see Book XI, pp. 128-142.



As the Introduction stated, the deconstruction of ethics and foreign policy is not *opposed* to the possibility of an ethical foreign policy, but inspired by a desire *for* an ethical, responsible relation to otherness. This Conclusion summarises the main arguments of the thesis and draws out its central contributions by reasoning them through the possibility of an ‘ethical foreign policy *to come*’. Such an openness to the future-to-come of ethics and foreign policy is important in the study of foreign policy (FPA) as well as in the British and EU foreign policy texts. But what is meant by the inelegant phrase ‘ethical foreign policy *to come*’? To answer this question, an outline of Derrida’s use of the term ‘democracy to come’ is necessary.

### ***Promise and Perfectibility of the To Come***

An introduction to the ‘future-to-come,’ as that which is impossible to anticipate but *may* come, *perhaps*, was given in Chapter VI. But what does it mean to speak of a concept, or a practice, as having a ‘to come’? Derrida describes various concepts and institutions as containing such a to come; these include justice,<sup>965</sup> the gift,<sup>966</sup> reason,<sup>967</sup> communism,<sup>968</sup> international law and international institutions.<sup>969</sup> However, the dominant description comes in relation to *democracy*. In *The Other Heading*, Derrida observes that to speak of its “to come” means democracy is “never simply given... but rather something that remains to be thought... that must have the structure of a promise.”<sup>970</sup> Prefixing ‘democracy’ with a ‘to come’ does not therefore mean what we may currently understand as a representative, generally liberal, form of parliamentary government. It is not pointing to “the future of a democracy that is going to come or that must come or even a democracy that *is* the future.” To speak of the “very concept of democracy as a concept of promise” means it will not *be present* in the future.<sup>971</sup>

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<sup>965</sup> Derrida, “Force of Law”, p. 27.

<sup>966</sup> Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, p. 39.

<sup>967</sup> Derrida, *Rogues*, p. xv.

<sup>968</sup> Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p. 99.

<sup>969</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 75.

<sup>970</sup> Derrida, *The Other Heading*, p. 78.

<sup>971</sup> Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p. 64.



Derrida thus conceives the promise of the to come as *messianic*.<sup>972</sup> The experience of the promise, the experience of waiting for democracy to come, is likened to that of a religion which awaits the coming of the messiah.<sup>973</sup> However, the crucial difference between the promise of the to come and religion is the *lack* of a messiah. The to come is an experience of “messianicity without messianism”,<sup>974</sup> *without* a messiah. A concept of the future to come, as observed in Chapter VI, is beyond anticipation, apprehension and fore-knowledge. Thus, unlike religion, experiencing the promise of a concept which is to come is about “a waiting without horizon of expectation”,<sup>975</sup> without any expectation of when, who or what will come. It is less like waiting for God than *Waiting for Godot*.<sup>976</sup>

Nonetheless, despite the lack of a messiah as the future-present of democracy, or rather *because of* this lack, the promise of the messianic without messianism still remains “affirmative” and “emancipatory”.<sup>977</sup> Instead of being simply achievable and possible, the promise of democracy to come is *beyond* apprehension, knowledge and programming, beyond all our current designations of democracy as liberal or representative. This promise gives an affirmative injunction to strive *for* its achievement, for its *avenir*, despite the im-possibility of this accomplishment. As Derrida puts it, the “expression ‘democracy to come’ does indeed translate or call for a militant and interminable political critique.”<sup>978</sup> The experience of democracy to come then is both like, and *unlike*, that of Vladimir and Estragon, who simply wait for Godot without leaving their spot. The “*to* of the ‘to come’ wavers between imperative injunction (call or performative) and the patient *perhaps* of messianicity (nonperformative exposure to what comes, to what can always not come or has already come)”.<sup>979</sup>

Thus, current affirmations of today’s ‘democracy’ are far from enough; the performative *to* calls for an indefinite contestation of democracy’s contemporary forms in the name of

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<sup>972</sup> Derrida, *Negotiations*, p. 180.

<sup>973</sup> Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p. 167-168.

<sup>974</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 13.

<sup>975</sup> Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p. 168.

<sup>976</sup> Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965).

<sup>977</sup> Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p. 75.

<sup>978</sup> Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 86.

<sup>979</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.



‘democracy to come’. This is what Derrida enacts in affirming international institutions and international law while pointing out their significant failures and inadequacies.<sup>980</sup> All the out-dated concepts on which institutions such as the UN are based, such as state sovereignty, require rethinking through an interminable political critique:

Which does not mean that international institutions are to be condemned. We ought to be glad they exist, imperfect as they may be, and their perfectibility attests to their future, their still-to-come. Their current existence, even when it leaves something to be desired, represents an immense step forward.<sup>981</sup>

The promise of concepts and institutions with a to come, their messianicity without messianism, is demonstrated by their perfectibility, by their capacity for improvement and even “progress.”<sup>982</sup> As Thomson argues, with the concept of ‘democracy-to-come’, Derrida “does confirm the possibility of there being more democracy rather than less”.<sup>983</sup> Yet this progress, this “step forward”,<sup>984</sup> is only possible as a heavily circumscribed movement of contestation and negotiation which seeks, but cannot achieve, *perfection*.

The *perfectibility* of democracy to come should not, however, blind us to its corollary: an equally necessary *pervertibility*. As was observed in Chapter VI, remaining open to the future-to-come is hazardous: “[t]he future can only be anticipated in the form of an absolute danger”.<sup>985</sup> Because we cannot apprehend what may come it “can only be proclaimed, *presented*, as a sort of monstrosity”.<sup>986</sup> This is what Penelope Deutscher is observing when she implies that the perfectibility and pervertibility are equally potential corollaries of the to come: in the process of perfecting and improving, “this improvement itself containing the risks of perversion”.<sup>987</sup> As Chapter III argued, democracy is always autoimmune; its suicide is a threat that is necessarily contained in the promise of

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<sup>980</sup> See, for instance, Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, pp. 83-84.

<sup>981</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 75.

<sup>982</sup> Derrida, *Deconstruction Engaged*, p. 100.

<sup>983</sup> Thomson, *Deconstruction and Democracy*, p. 29.

<sup>984</sup> Derrida, *Echographies of Television*, p. 75.

<sup>985</sup> Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 5.

<sup>986</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>987</sup> Penelope Deutscher, in Derrida, *Deconstruction Engaged*, p. 97.



democracy. Thus the promise of the to come must be “a promise that risks and must always risk being perverted into a threat”.<sup>988</sup>

Talking of democracy to come then is a matter of obeying the dual injunction of a deconstruction: to gesture in opposite directions at the same time.<sup>989</sup> On the one hand, perfection can only be treated as a *potential* which cannot be achieved and which could be dangerous, but on the other, it must be positively affirmed through its perfectibility *and* pervertibility. Derrida reveals how the two are tied together in the struggle to bring democracy to presence, to make it come, by playing on the Spanish and Italian double meaning of *si* – both positive as a ‘yes,’ and potential as an ‘if.’

*If [si] democracy does not exist and if [si] it is true that, amorphous or polymorphous, it never will exist, is it not necessary to continue, and with all one’s heart, to force oneself to achieve it? Well, yes [si], it is necessary; one must, one ought, one cannot not strive towards it with all one’s force.*<sup>990</sup>

The apparently tentative nature of this quasi-positive, quasi-affirmative, *if/yes* is the indispensable structure of the promise, and thus of any concept which is to come. It gestures at once towards democracy to come’s requisite potential nature, its lack of messianism, but also to the affirmative perfectibility of its messianic promise. And it is this perfectibility which institutes continual dissatisfaction and incessant critique of today’s ‘democracy’.

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<sup>988</sup> Derrida, “Autoimmunity”, p. 120.

<sup>989</sup> Derrida, “Dialogue with Jacques Derrida”, p. 120.

<sup>990</sup> Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 74.



## *Ethical Foreign Policy To Come?*

The suggestion of an ethical foreign policy to come is made precisely as a *si*, both an *if* and a *yes*. It encapsulates the *yes*, the desire, the affirmation and perfectibility/pervertibility, the striving *for* an ethical foreign policy; but also captures the *if*, its necessary *potentiality*, its undecidability and never ultimately achievable possibility. Indeed, because this undecidable potentiality is the necessary *condition* of their being politics and ethics,<sup>991</sup> the *if* is an inseparable condition of the *yes*. The Introduction to this thesis noted the co-constitution of the apparently separate issues of ethics and foreign policy; both concern the construction of, and relation to, otherness. If ethics and foreign policy, as it has been understood in the British and EU foreign policy texts, has a to come, a promise and perfectibility, then it is in this *im-possibly responsible relation to otherness*.

However, the affirmation of ‘ethics’ and the ‘ethical’ is not only controversial in IR and FPA, it is also problematic in relation to Derridean scholarship. Geoffrey Bennington argues, quite correctly, that “[d]econstruction cannot propose an ethics” because ethics is “metaphysical through and through and can therefore never simply be assumed or affirmed in deconstruction. The demand or desire for a ‘deconstructive ethics’ is in this sense doomed to disappointment.”<sup>992</sup> John Caputo, in more provocative terms, uses deconstructive thinking to declare himself *against* ethics, because this position best acknowledges “the lack of safety by which judging is everywhere beset”.<sup>993</sup> He argues that Derrida’s declining the idea of an ethics of deconstruction,<sup>994</sup> is aimed at “appreciating” the “tenuous delicacy” of undecidability.<sup>995</sup>

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<sup>991</sup> Derrida, *Limited Inc*, p. 116.

<sup>992</sup> Geoffrey Bennington, *Interrupting Derrida* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 34.

<sup>993</sup> John D. Caputo, *Against Ethics: Contributions to a Poetics of Obligation with Constant Reference to Deconstruction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), p. 4.

<sup>994</sup> As he does in Derrida, “Passions: ‘An Oblique Offering’”, p. 14.

<sup>995</sup> Caputo, *Against Ethics*, p. 3.



Bennington and Caputo are right to warn against any easy use of ethics. Derrida himself observes that he has “too much reticence to use the word [ethics] easily”.<sup>996</sup> However, this should not prevent us from an uneasy, unsafe use of the word. Far from *simply* assuming or affirming an ethics, this thesis has appealed to ethics as an “ongoing historical practice”,<sup>997</sup> stressing its *ongoingness*, its openness, its to come. There is only disappointment if a closed, decidable ethics is sought. The deconstruction and negotiation of a responsible relation to otherness in this thesis is, in contrast, a self-consciously risky affirmation of the undecidability of ethics, an affirmation of its perfectibility and pervertibility.

In Derrida’s later work, there is a suggestion that he was rethinking what ethics might mean, and gesturing towards its perfectibility.

I tried to argue in my seminar this year that pure ethics, if there is any, begins with the respectable dignity of the other as the absolute *unlike*, recognized as nonrecognizable, indeed as unrecognizable, beyond all knowledge, all cognition and all recognition: far from being the beginning of pure ethics, the neighbour as like or as resembling, as looking like, spells the end or the ruin of such an ethics, if there is any.<sup>998</sup>

Negotiating ethics, this pure relation to the absolute unlike, is what Derrida explicitly calls for in a “thinking of responsibility which does not stop” at the “dominant schema” of “determin[ing] the neighbour” as *like* our selves.<sup>999</sup> This would be a pure ethics as an purely ethical foreign policy – an absolutely ethical and responsible relation to otherness, to the unlike, the ‘foreign’. However, the thinking of this “unthought” relation “is still to come”.<sup>1000</sup> But the careful negotiation of the possibility and impossibility of this association, one of taking “in without being able to lodge the other *chez soi* [at home in the self]”, motivates much of Derrida’s most provocative thought.<sup>1001</sup>

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<sup>996</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Altérités*, cited in and translated by Thomson, *Deconstruction and Democracy*, p. 127.

<sup>997</sup> Walker, *Inside/Outside*, p. 51.

<sup>998</sup> Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 60.

<sup>999</sup> Derrida, “‘Eating Well’ or the Calculation of the Subject”, p. 116.

<sup>1000</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1001</sup> Derrida, *Without Alibi*, p. xxxiii.



This ethical relation to the other and otherness which Derrida seeks to provoke was also sought in Chapter VI of this thesis through illustrating a potential negotiation of British and EU foreign policy: a responsible and hospitable saving and welcoming of the other *while retaining its otherness*, and without making it the *same*. The promise, the *if/yes* of such an im-possible ethical foreign policy is what Chapter VI aimed to *institute* through negotiation while acknowledging its necessary potentiality, which resists final *constitution*. This is why negotiation remains the place of the ethico-political, rather than the ethical itself.

As with the concept of democracy to come, invoking a to come of ethics and foreign policy calls for incessant critique of the current claims to its enactment, as well as a consideration of all foreign policy text *as* ethics. This consists of an endless challenging, such as that in Chapters III to V, of the *closure* towards the future that these texts enact, the future of an ethical, responsible relation to otherness *opened* up by claims to an ethical dimension of foreign policy. Campbell suggests that a potential openness is also demonstrated by FPA literature, especially in Rosenau's description of FPA as a discipline.<sup>1002</sup> Those who study foreign policy, says Rosenau,

... must concern themselves with politics at every level... It is in some profound sense a discipline with limitless boundaries... [Students of FPA must] expand their horizons, enlarge their kit of analytical tools, and probe for meaning in heretofore unexplored areas of social, economic and political life... With the passage of time, in short, foreign policy has come to encompass nothing less than the full range of individual and collective processes whereby people seek to give meaning and hope to their lives.<sup>1003</sup>

Campbell claims that this signals "the existence of a potential if undeveloped open-endedness" in FPA that could suggest an "alternative theorization" of foreign policy.<sup>1004</sup> Such open-endedness is also, perhaps, denoted in unconventional FPA by Kowert's

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<sup>1002</sup> Campbell, *Writing Security*, p. 39.

<sup>1003</sup> Rosenau, "New Directions and Recurrent Questions...", pp. 1-3.

<sup>1004</sup> Campbell, *Writing Security*, p. 39.



acknowledgement that ethics constitutes a “lacuna” for “the untested promise of constructivism”.<sup>1005</sup>

However, any potential openness has not been developed, and paths to a possible rethinking of foreign policy connected to otherness, politics and ethics, are continually closed. Chapter I revealed how both FPA’s conventional and unconventional forms marginalise questions of politics and ethics in the study of foreign policy. This closure arises from the often unstated, and always unquestioned, assumptions by which FPA constructs the world of foreign policy. Such presuppositions lead ‘conventional’ analyses to ask only a narrow range of questions (‘why’ questions), to rely on a problematic but foundational separation between the state’s inside and outside, and to favour ‘scientific’ methodologies purged of moral questioning. For ‘unconventional,’ or constructivist, FPA this closure emerges from constructivism’s fetishist concern to maintain its ‘middle-ground’ acceptability to conventional FPA and IR. The concern demonstrates itself in the limiting reference to a non-discursive reality, a continued reliance on the inside/outside dichotomy, and the desire to achieve an impossible ‘better’ account of foreign policy decisions.

The dichotomising assumptions which mark FPA literature must be questioned and deconstructed, in the terms outlined in Chapter II, for there to be any development in its open-endedness. This thesis has been, in part, a contribution to such a development, to a more open, ethico-political retheorisation of foreign policy as *text*. This has meant a thinking of ethics and foreign policy together – one as a function and constitution of the other in the way they relate to otherness. It also suggests the possibility for future research in FPA, research which examines the *politics* of foreign policy and develops upon the potential open-endedness which Campbell identifies.

There is a much clearer openness to the promise and perfectibility of an ethical relation to otherness in the “ethical dimension” instantiated by both British and EU foreign policy. Mervyn Frost announced himself “delighted” at the announcement of an ethical

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<sup>1005</sup> Kowert, “Towards a Constructivist Theory of Foreign Policy”, p. 268.



dimension in the British case “because by stressing ethics he [Cook] was merely making explicit what is implicit in all foreign policies”.<sup>1006</sup> While this thesis has made a similar case for the co-constitution of ethics and foreign policy, its reasons for valuing explicitness is very different. For Frost, the appeal of an overt position-taking regarding ethics is that it allows others to “judge foreign policy by the standards which the government has set for itself”.<sup>1007</sup>

In a reply to Frost’s article, Eric Herring lambasts British foreign policy for its “vigorous and systematic violat[ion] of the ethics professed in its Mission Statement”.<sup>1008</sup> Herring does not share Frost’s delight at the explicit statement of an ethical dimension, accusing Cook and Blair of “dishonesty and hypocrisy”.<sup>1009</sup> Ironically however, Frost and Herring appear to agree upon the reason for Frost’s delight: the possibility of judging the ethics of British foreign policy based on the standards it has set for itself. Hence, Herring’s critique is precisely a *damning* ethical judgement of British foreign policy. However, to value the affirmation of an ethical dimension only in terms of allowing judgement is severely restricted and restricting. It ignores the *openness* such a statement institutes, an openness to the promise and perfectibility of ethics and foreign policy, an openness to its deconstruction and negotiation, an openness to its *to come*.

The importance of Herring’s critique, and others like him who condemn the ethics of Britain’s foreign policy,<sup>1010</sup> should not be underestimated. After all, the potentiality of

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<sup>1006</sup> Frost, “Putting the World to Rights”, p. 81. For a more in-depth exposition of Frost’s position on ethics and foreign policy, see Mervyn Frost, “The ethics of humanitarian intervention: protecting civilians to make democratic citizenship possible”, in Smith and Light (eds.), *Ethics and Foreign Policy*, pp. 33-54.

<sup>1007</sup> Frost, “Putting the World to Rights”, p. 88.

<sup>1008</sup> Eric Herring, “Response to Mervyn Frost: The Systematic Violation of Ethical Norms in British Foreign Policy” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* Vol. 12, No. 2 (1999), p. 91.

<sup>1009</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>1010</sup> See for example: Neil Cooper, who argues that British foreign policy has failed to make the arms agenda more ethical – “The pariah agenda and New Labour’s ethical arms sales policy” in Little and Wickham-Jones (eds.), *New Labour’s foreign policy*, p. 163; Davina Millier, who claims that “ethical considerations, including human rights, have been sacrificed in order to effect engagement” with countries such as Iran – “British foreign policy, human rights and Iran” in Little and Wickham-Jones (eds.), *New Labour’s foreign policy*, p. 189; Mark Curtis’s suggestion that Britain “clearly has a generally unethical foreign policy” – Curtis, *Web of Deceit*, p. 362. For more sympathetic critiques, see the articles of Wheeler and Dunne: Wheeler and Dunne, “Good international citizenship”, pp. 847-870; Tim Dunne and Nicholas J. Wheeler, “The Blair doctrine: advancing the Third Way in the world”, in Little and Wickham-Jones (eds.), *New Labour’s Foreign Policy*, pp. 61-76 ; and Nicholas J. Wheeler and Tim Dunne, “Moral



the to come calls for *interminable* critique. But this is not *all* it calls for. The promise of an ethical foreign policy to come lies in its perfectibility, the perfectibility of an undecidably im-possible relation of responsibility to otherness through negotiation and critique. However, to initiate this perfectibility requires a more fundamental criticism and an *unlimited* questioning of the possibility of ethics and foreign policy. Too often arguments such as Herring's are made regarding how states *ought* to conduct their foreign policies without questioning what makes both ethics *and/as* foreign policy possible in the first place. This thesis provides a sustained deconstructive analysis of the ultimately unfounded foundations upon which this possibility is built.

The undecidable possibility of a responsible relation to otherness depends, first and foremost, upon there being a subject of ethics and foreign policy which can relate to otherness. There must be some understanding of what 'we' – and others *like* ourselves – *are* which makes 'us' capable of acting ethically in international affairs. British and EU foreign policy constructs this subject as that which is capable of taking responsibility for the lives and suffering of others. However, as the deconstruction undertaken in Chapter III revealed, such a notion of subjectivity cannot be achieved but always remains undecidable as to its possibility. Its reliance on the im-possible ability to accept responsibility comes undone through the internally inconsistent logic of state failure and a constant shifting in the discourse between different signifiers of subjectivity ('Britain', the 'International Community', the 'International Coalition', and so on).

A negotiation of subjectivity, as illustrated in Chapter VI, reveals the possibility of an ethico-political decision to affirm a subject in response to a call from the other. This negotiation strives for an openness to a future-to-come of ethics and foreign policy, while closing to its 'worst' calculation, its perversion. The perpetual challenging and critique of any claim to a 'we' who can act responsibly opens up new possibilities, potentially ending the dominant narrative of a 'state' subject in foreign policy. As such, Chapters III and VI are considered to supplement the debate on what Jabri calls the

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Britannia? Evaluating the Ethical Dimension in Labour's Foreign Policy" Foreign Policy Centre (2004), <http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/233.pdf> (accessed 2 June 2004).



“restyling” of the subject of responsibility in international relations.<sup>1011</sup> There is certainly a need for Jabri’s restyling of the individual subject, taking it beyond a stale debate between cosmopolitans and communitarians. But this thesis offers different possibilities for affirming *collective* subjects in response to a call from the other.

Despite the undecidability of the subjectivity inscribed in the British and EU texts, it is also important to examine how both represent the possibility of enacting ethics and foreign policy. In British foreign policy (1997-2006), this possibility was described as a responsibility for both ‘protecting’ and ‘saving’ others. However, like subjectivity, Chapter IV demonstrated this enactment of responsibility to be undecidably im-possible. Britain’s apparently responsible interventions in other countries in order to ‘protect’ human life were also, by their own logic, an unethical and irresponsible ‘attack’ upon other human lives. Equally, the responsibility to ‘save’ undermined the logic of its own ethicality. The responsible compassion of ‘saving’ those suffering from poverty and disease, as well as for ‘saving’ the failing states in Africa who produce such suffering, was also an irresponsible contempt for the other *as* other.

Nonetheless, the unachievable desire for a responsible relation to protect and save the other *as an other*, which cannot be lodged *chez soi*,<sup>1012</sup> must not be renounced. The optimism of this thesis lies in the promise of such a relation, its perfectibility, and the possibility that it can be negotiated through individual ethico-political decisions. An indicative sketch illustrating the potential for such a negotiation was given in Chapter VI. This retains an openness to inaugurations and inventions of new opportunities for enacting responsibility towards the other, possibilities that are, *perhaps*, less violent, less contemptuous and less determined in advance. This relation must remain a *perhaps*, a may be, to come, but negotiation and invention allows that there could be *more* responsibility rather than less.

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<sup>1011</sup> See Jabri, “Restyling the Subject of Responsibility in International Relations”.

<sup>1012</sup> Derrida, *Without Alibi*, p. xxxiii.



The EU foreign policy text contrasted well with that of the British. The enactment of the responsibility espoused was more circumspect and yet increasingly assured. The research conducted on the text of EU foreign policy, and reflected in Chapter V, found that responsibility was enacted through a hospitable welcoming of neighbouring countries and regions into the EU. This can be considered a major contribution to the understanding of EU foreign policy, which has not thus far been read as a discourse of hospitality. Far from an imposed interpretation, this understanding arises from the discourse of key figures who spoke, and where spoken by, the EU text. It also contributes to an increased awareness of hospitality as an important concept in IR. While largely ignored due to its liminality – what Dillon calls the ‘inter’ of international relations regarding the refugee<sup>1013</sup> – this thesis makes a case for hospitality’s increased centrality for the possibility of ethics in world politics.

A deconstruction of the EU’s discourse finds that the hospitality granted through the EU’s policy of enlargement, its policies towards the Balkans, and the ENP, is also an unethical, irresponsible *hostility* due to the conditions it places on those who seek entry. An unconditional hospitality also includes a hostility by endangering the home which makes hospitality possible. Yet this undecidable *hostipitality* is the condition of hospitality having a to come. As Deutscher observes, “there is no model hospitality, only processes always in the course of perverting and improving, this improvement itself containing the risks of perversion”.<sup>1014</sup> The indicative negotiation of the promise of hospitality in Chapter VI produced precisely such a dangerous rethinking of its impossible undecidability. It opened new im-possibilities for EU foreign policy, possibilities of a hospitable welcoming to otherness which remain impossible for the EU as it understands itself – both as a geographically and ethically defined ‘home’.

To return to Lord Howe’s evocative analogy, the deconstruction and negotiation of the undecidable im-possibility of ethics and foreign policy in this thesis offers a way of leaving the stone slightly higher up the mountain. The focus of Chapter VI has been on

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<sup>1013</sup> Dillon, “The Scandal of the Refugee”.

<sup>1014</sup> Deutscher, in Derrida, *Deconstruction Engaged*, p. 97.



*how* this can be done, not *where* the stone will necessarily end up. Nonetheless, an ethico-political foreign policy of negotiating individual decisions must always retain the hope of rolling the stone higher, *improving* the ethicality of foreign policy and realising *more* responsibility in the relation to otherness. This is only possible through retaining a reference in negotiation to the perfectibility and promise of an ethical foreign policy *to come*.

The fulfilment of this promise must remain something beyond our expectation, a messianic without messianism. But the messianic promise remains. The appeal of a deconstruction and negotiation of ethics and foreign policy is that it provides a *way* of rolling the Sisyphean stone. Conceived as a movement *through* undecidability, negotiation does not, and cannot, *produce* an ethical foreign policy and reach the top of the mountain. In addition, negotiation always risks the stone rolling further *down* the mountain, producing the worst, most damaging policy which closes towards otherness. But because ethics and foreign policy are co-constituted as attempts to differentiate the self from the other and relate to this otherness, any foreign policy has little option but to roll the stone. Ethics is inherent to foreign policy, but there can be more or less ethical ethics. And moving a stone, however ethical, up a mountain is inherently risky. Negotiation, nevertheless, provides the possibility of a movement that can be taken as a chance *as well* as a risk. It allows an optimism that the stone can be left higher up the mountain than where it was found.



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